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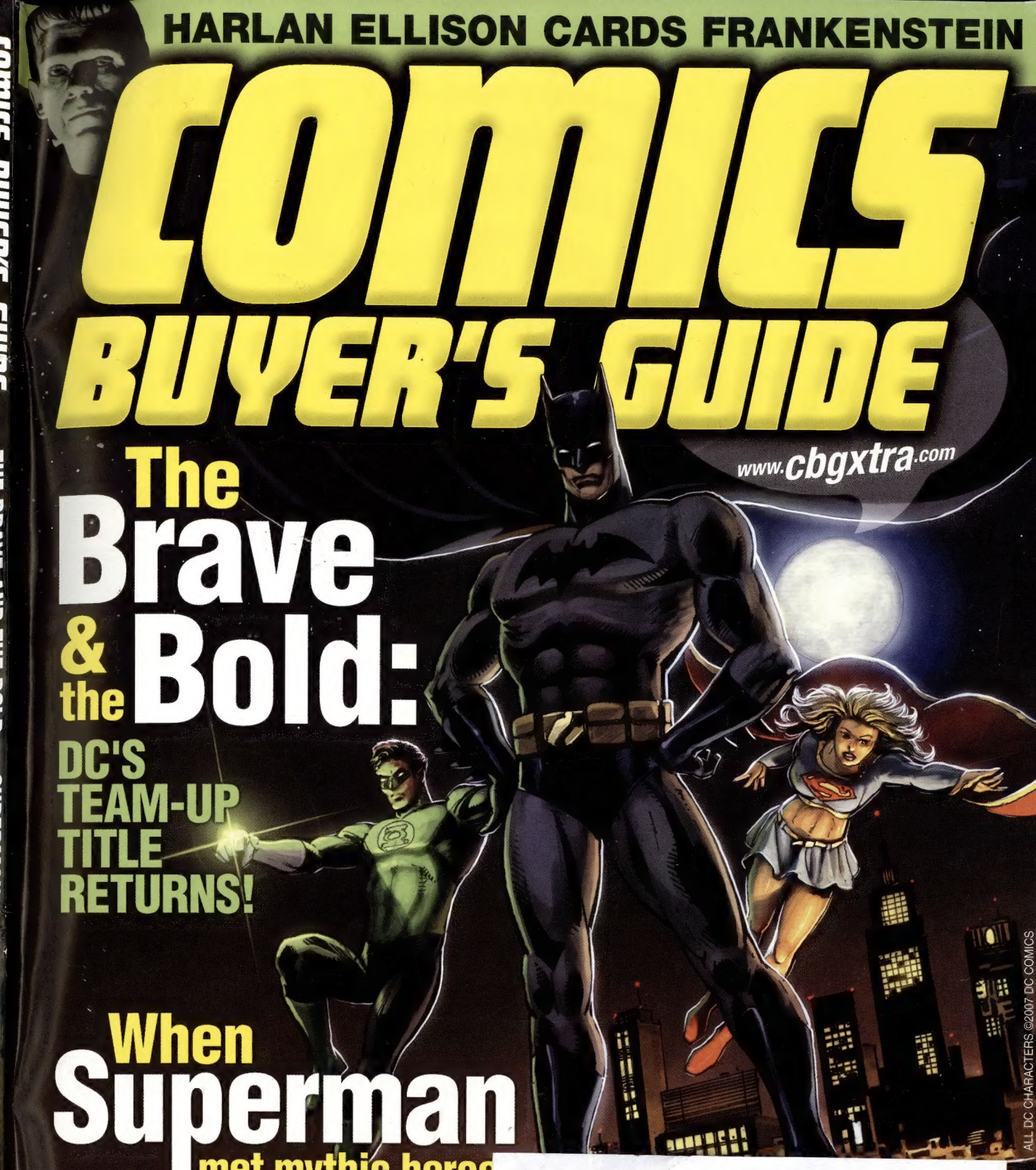

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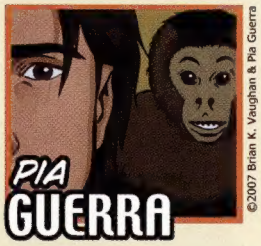

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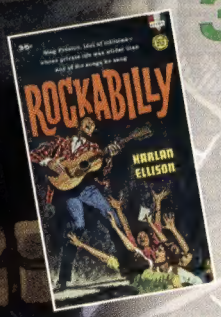
April 2007

BRAVE AND THE BOLD
DC BRINGS BACK ITS TEAM-UP ANTHOLOGY FOR A NEW GENERATION!
PAGE 12



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our apologies to Mike, Mark, and Destination Entertainment!

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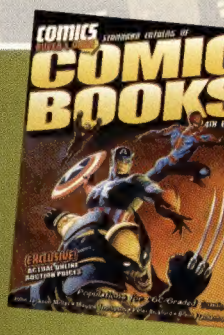

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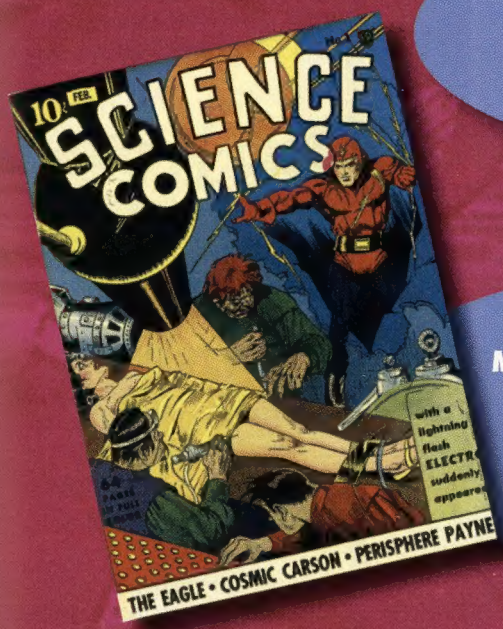

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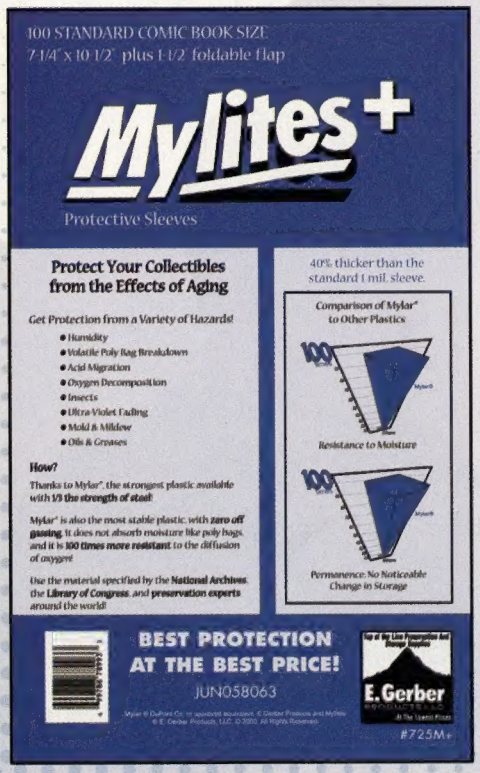

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MAGGIE: Hey, Brent! I've got a nifty idea!

BRENT: Um, well, um, what *now*?

MAGGIE: How well do you remember The Olden Days?

BRENT: Which by you would be when dinosaurs ruled the —

MAGGIE: Well, let's say back when Don and I were columnists in *The Buyer's Guide for Comic Fandom* and Alan Light was publishing it?

BRENT: I've seen ***CBG***'s predecessor while paging through our archives, and, of course, I worked on the new editions of *All in Color for a Dime* and *The Comic-Book Book*.

MAGGIE: I'm just sayin' that people who *do* recollect such things should be respected by latecomers.

BRENT: Respected? Well ... Thanks to my mom and dad's hanging onto their Golden Age and 1950s comics — and letting me read them when I was a kid — my memories go pretty far back.

MAGGIE: And you've been with ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** since, oh, #982, right?

BRENT: Right.

MAGGIE: And you've been editing like crazy ever since, right?

BRENT: Right. I remember Don telling me, when I was applying for the job, that all he did, "all day long is type, type, type." And it's true, it's oh, *so* true.

MAGGIE: So you should be Editor Brent Frankenhoff.

BRENT: And you would be ...

MAGGIE: At the risk of such snide references as how many "senior moments" I have, how's about Senior Editor Maggie Thompson? That should get me the deep respect I've always coveted, right?

BRENT: Um, right. Yeah, right. *[Biting tongue]* Right.

MAGGIE & BRENT [in unison]: ***Right!***

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The Brave and the Bold. That's the title of the long-running DC Comics series relaunching in 2007. But the phrase might also apply to the two creators at the helm of that relaunch.

Brave & Bold for a new century

DC's team-up title returns with more guest-stars

by GEORGE NELSON

Begun in 1955 as a title carrying such features as "Robin Hood," "The Silent Knight," and "The Viking Prince," after two dozen or so issues, the original incarnation of *The Brave and the Bold* reverted for a time to a *Showcase*-type tryout book that featured the first appearances of The Justice League of America, The Teen Titans, and The Silver Age Hawkman.

It then became a team-up title matching various DC stars before settling on Batman as its regular lead, beginning with #74 (Nov 67). For the rest of the title's 200-issue run, The Caped Crusader was paired with characters running a gamut ranging from fellow JLAers Green Arrow, Atom, and Wonder Woman to such others as Deadman, Sgt. Rock, and Kamandi. (For more on those team-ups, see Captain Comics' article immediately following.)

The new *Brave and the Bold* revives its incarnation as a team-up title spanning the DC universe, although, in a nod to history, the first issue stars *Brave and the Bold* mainstay Batman as one of its leads, teaming The Dark Knight with Green Lantern. But, while Batman won't be around every issue, two other DC stars will: writer Mark Waid and penciller George Pérez, who will be inked by Bob Wiacek on the title.

"What happened was we saw a lot of success in *Superman/Batman*," DC Universe Executive Editor Dan DiDio told ***CBG***, "and we wanted to create a strong companion book." *Brave and the Bold* was a personal favorite title of DiDio's, and he said that, while he'd always wanted to bring it back, it was a matter of "finding the right way to do it."

Waid, DiDio said, has a strong knowledge of DC's characters and how their personalities interact. And the series' format — featuring different characters during the course of each arc — also plays to Pérez' strengths.

Waid's writing credits stretch back to the 1980s and include *Kingdom Come*; a run on *Flash*; *Superman: Birthright*, where he reinterpreted The Man of Steel's origins for the 21st century; a popular run on *Fantastic Four*; and the recent reboot of *Legion of Super-Heroes*. He is also one of the writers on DC's weekly series, *52*, helping to chronicle the post-*Infinite Crisis* world of the DC universe.

A 30-year industry veteran and perennial fan favorite best known for his work on group and team projects, Pérez has drawn *Fantastic Four* and two runs on *Avengers* (including the "Heroes Return" relaunch with Kurt Busiek) at Marvel, and DC's *New Teen Titans*, *Justice League of America*, and *Wonder Woman*, which he also wrote. In recent years, Pérez pencilled and inked his — and many comics fans' — dream project, *JLA/Avengers*. This past year, he contributed pages to *Infinite Crisis*, the sequel to *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, the DC universe-changing maxi-series he drew two decades ago.

Waid recalled that several months back DiDio had asked him what his dream project would be, "and a team-up book spanning the entire DC universe was the first notion that came to mind. It's that simple." *Brave and the Bold*, he said, lets him and Pérez travel the length, breadth, and depth of the DC universe and, "gives me a chance to play with whatever toys I like, so long as I promise not to break 'em."

Waid said he is planning for a mix of multipart arcs and Done in One tales. He has the first arc plotted: a five-issue tale with the first issue scheduled for a February release. "The overall approach is to find stories where we can organically pull characters in and out of the tale as needed," he explained. "For example, #1

"We saw a lot of success in *Superman/Batman* and we wanted to create a strong companion book."

— Dan DiDio

"Knowing what a DC fanboy Mark is, I thought this would be a perfect vehicle for both of us."
— George Pérez

co-stars Batman and Green Lantern, but, by next issue, it's Batman's job to follow the subplot, while GL teams with Supergirl to follow the 'main' plot. And so on and so forth." He'd like to follow the initial arc with a single issue or a two-part story, "but we'll see what the Big Man" — aka Pérez — "says about that," he said. "And by 'Big,' I mean in talent."

For Pérez, who is looking forward to being "DC's newest Jimmy Aparo" [*Brave and the Bold*'s artist for the bulk of its run as a Batman book], it was a matter of all the cards falling into the right place. DC, he recalled, had been leaning toward assigning him to one of the Green Lantern titles. "When I heard about *Brave and the Bold*, I really regretted that I was going to be doing *Green Lantern*," he continued. "The very next day I received a phone call from Dan DiDio, who asked if I would be heartbroken, if I didn't mind that, rather than doing *Green Lantern* as he and I had discussed, I would be willing to start *Brave and the Bold*. So it worked out so incredibly perfectly."

He also said he has wanted to work with Waid for years, only having previously collaborated briefly while both were exclusive with CrossGen, a publisher whose output ended in 2004.

"I did one story with him and, reading his plots and the way he constructs a page, he thinks so visually, I had such an easy time working on Mark's plot," Pérez said. "And, knowing what a DC fanboy Mark is, I thought this would be a perfect vehicle for both of us." Waid is not only a "master storyteller," he said, but brings, "an encyclopedic knowledge, respect, and affection" for DC and its characters. "I don't have to worry about the plot not being true to the character," Pérez said.

Waid acknowledged that he has "a pretty good idea" of who DC's characters are and what makes them tick. "I'm not egotistical enough to claim that I have *the* definitive interpretation of them, but it does help that I know most of DC's heroes and villains better than I know my own family."

Asked what Pérez brings to *Brave and the Bold*, Waid responded, "How about the fact that he can draw almost anything? And anyone? And won't rest until he, in fact, has the opportunity to do just that?" Having Pérez on the project, he added, gives him the courage to ask for a broader range of characters and locales, "knowing there's not anyone or anywhere that George isn't eager to capture on paper in his inimitable style."

Pérez, who received the first issue's script in April 2006, said he had expected to start working on *Brave and the Bold* in November 2005, with the first issue expected to be ready for the 2006 convention season, after the series had been announced during the 2005 convention season. However, in the interim, he was offered the chance to draw *JSA* #82 — an "Infinite Crisis" tie-in that allowed him to work for the first time with the issue's writer, DC Publisher and President Paul Levitz, whom Pérez had known since they were teens. He was also asked to do additional work on *Infinite Crisis* itself, further pushing back the schedule. Waid's participation in DC's weekly series, *52*, also caused delays in the launch.

The *JSA* issue also provided the opportunity for a tryout of the art team, with Wiacek inking Pérez' pencils and Tom Smith, "who has a long history with me," coloring the book, Pérez said.

So far, Waid told ***CBG***, he couldn't be happier with how work on the new *Brave and the Bold* is going. While remarking that Pérez takes every five-panel page in the plot and turns it into a 14-panel page, he added, "But that's great. He doesn't cheat. He doesn't hedge. And his storytelling and character work are boffo."

Interviewed in November, Pérez — who hadn't worked on a monthly title since CrossGen's *Solus* three years ago — said work was going fine so far on *Brave and the Bold*. At the time, he was a quarter of the way through #2 and working on the cover of #3. "I'm determined to keep this book going and not make people wait exorbitant amounts of time — at least, not on my end."

He said he was also pleased with the finished inks, noting that Wiacek's style is, "a little more clean than mine is," and doesn't do more, "noodling than is necessary to make the art work. It's a nice, clean job, very much like the Joe Sinnott school.

"And Lord knows I am making him work."

The first two issues open with similar opening scenes: a pair of figures flying through space, lulling Wiacek into a "false sense of security," Pérez said. "Page 4 of both books blows that bit of optimism right out of the park."

Waid said he is particularly pleased with the scenes between Bruce Wayne and Hal Jordan in Las Vegas, "because George not only nailed exactly the interpersonal dynamics I was asking for, he trumped up the comedy beyond my wildest expectations." Waid said he'd also been particularly struck by how the artist found, "in his artistic interpretation and quite under his own volition, the same exact happy medium with Batman that I've been striving for: still grim, still intense, still serious, but not so dark as to be unbearable."

Pérez said Waid's blueprint is already there. "I'm just remembering who the characters are and upping the byplay," he commented. One of

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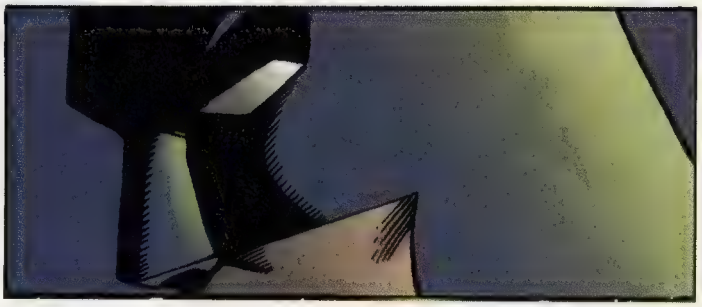

"It would be a lot more daunting challenge, if George weren't aboard."
— Mark Waid

the things people wondered about, he said, was whether he and Waid would be doing "another bitter conflict" between Batman and Green Lantern, given tensions between the two in recent years. Put Pérez said they are getting along very well. "They go to Vegas together, dammit — and it *stays* in Vegas."

Drawing the Vegas setting itself was a challenge, Pérez added, noting that drawing casinos is hard — and designing one is even harder. "But I like it when any writer tosses a surprise lob at me. Kurt Busiek did it, Marv Wolfman did it, and I'm happy to say that Mark is of the same ilk." He also noted that, while they are generally doing five-issue arcs, he and Waid are not "decompressing the story to do so." Waid is writing very dense scripts, and Pérez is putting a lot of extra art into the pages. "I'm hoping that the readers will see that they're getting the bang for their buck," Pérez said.

Waid said he plans to stay on *Brave and the Bold*, "until they run me out of town like Stephen Colbert fleeing a White House press corps dinner." Pérez said he expects to be on the title at least for its first year, although his next assignment could see him reteamed with Waid on *Legion of Super-Heroes* — one of his favorite books as a kid, but, "ironically one of the few super-team books I've never actually drawn."

DiDio said, "The key is to start with Mark and George and stay with them as long as we can."

Though *Superman/Batman* is a regular top-seller for DC, team titles, particularly those without an "anchor" character, haven't had an easy time in the marketplace: something not lost on the two creators.

"It would be a lot more daunting challenge, if George weren't aboard," Waid acknowledged. "I don't know that any writer can carry a series like that on his own — but, as part of an ongoing creative team, there's a much better chance that the book will have its own identity. Also, the interest in DC's main characters is at an all-time high right now, and, short of doing something commercially suicidal like trying to pass off a Metamorpho-meets-Captain Cold issue of *Brave and the Bold*, I think the chance to see George take a tour through the DC universe will benefit us mightily."

Pérez said that *Brave and the Bold* has a "cachet" among comics fans, and, with so many Bat-books already on the market, they may be ready for a *Brave and the Bold* that doesn't have Batman every issue. He also noted that, after Hal Jordan's successful return as Green Lantern, the character, "probably holds his own as well as Batman does in that issue," which could have featured GL with Wonder Woman or Superman, "and it wouldn't have diminished it.

"Of course, the advantage of *Brave and the Bold* is, if we're wrong on the choice of characters, it's only one issue."

Asked what readers can look forward to in coming months, Waid responded, "Beetle, Roulette, maybe Starbreaker, if his agent will just call back. And the line, 'I wish Barry had lived to see you with money.' "

Pérez said that the cover of the issue is not what readers would have expected, featuring Batman, Blue Beetle, and villains not associated with either character. "Mark is not only universe-spanning, but time-spanning.

"This is cool. Anything is possible. Who knows? I might even get a Legion in there somewhere."

Waid observed that, as far as future guest-stars go, "Honestly, as far as we're concerned, anyone is fair game. While we'd like to headline each issue with marquee characters at least to begin with, we're very intent on surprising readers with constant guest-stars streaming in and out of the stories as the plot requires.

"Just because the headliners for an issue may be, say, Superman and Firestorm doesn't mean that Enemy Ace or Mister Miracle can't pop up," he continued.

"In fact, that gives me an idea ..."

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There are brave questions, there are bold questions ...

Brave and Bold answers

by **ANDREW SMITH**
Contributing Editor

Whatever Mark Waid and George Pérez do with DC's new team-up book, they've got gihumongous shoes to fill.

The original *The Brave and the Bold* (Aug 55-Jul 83) began as an anthology of such "period" heroes as Shining Knight, Robin Hood, and Viking Prince, which explains the unusual (and archaic) name. Then *The Brave and the Bold* was re-invented as a bookend to DC's *Showcase* tryout title with #25 (Sep 59), featuring the Silver Age Suicide Squad, and in that format introduced us to Cave Carson and Strange Sports Stories (concepts which failed to spark a series) and the Silver Age Hawkman and Justice League of America (which, obviously, did).

But then came its reinvention as a team-up title, where it would find its greatest success — and a place in the hearts of several generations of fans. And it's those books, *The Brave and the Bold* #50-200, that I'm focusing this column on: the bravest and boldest examination you'll ever see of the subject!

Well, the *longest*, anyway.

It should be mentioned that one of *The Brave and the Bold's* charms is that it was like, as Forrest Gump would say, a box of chocolates. Aside from the occasional two-parter, most issues were confections generally unconnected to the books that came fore and aft — and sometimes seemingly unmoored from the DC universe entirely. Fans of the time began to refer to the events in *The Brave and the Bold* that couldn't be reconciled with the rest of DC's line as having occurred "on Earth-B" or "in the Haneyverse." This was in homage to Bob Haney, who wrote roughly two-thirds of the team-up books (most of #50-157) and in recognition of this prolific writer's cavalier attitude toward continuity.

Ready to go? Let's tiptoe through the team-ups, and I'll comment where I've got something to say:

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #50 (Nov 63):** This was the big one, the story that launched the team-up format that *The Brave and the Bold* would follow (mostly with Batman) for 20 years. Written by Bob Haney and drawn by George Roussos, "Wanted — The Capsule

Master!" starred the seemingly incongruous pair of Martian Manhunter and Green Arrow. Not only were these characters wildly mismatched in powers and *modus operandi*, not only had neither a "Martian Manhunter" nor a "Green Arrow" logo ever graced the top of a comic-book cover before, but that sure was a lot of green in one place!

However, was it really an accidental pairing — or a trial balloon for something bigger? Regular correspondent and Silver Age expert Adam Benson thinks the latter and wrote an essay to explain why. See **Conspiracy Theory #1** for the details.

Conspiracy Theory #1: The World's Second-Finest Heroes?

By Commander Adam Benson USN (Ret.)
***Brave and the Bold* Column Co-Star**

"Two Great Heroes Teamed in a Book-Length Blockbuster!"

With this blurb on the cover of *The Brave and the Bold* #50, DC teamed two of its minor but long-running characters: Green Arrow and The Manhunter from Mars.

"Wanted — the Capsule Master!" told the story of a gang of Martian criminals undertaking a "master plan" on Earth. When Green Arrow and Speedy ran afoul of these villains and found themselves outclassed, they turned to help from a logical source: Green Arrow's fellow Justice Leaguer, The Martian Manhunter.

While "Wanted" can be enjoyed — and is, indeed, entertaining — on a surface level, an astute DC fan of the day might have detected the seeds of deeper planning by *The Brave and the Bold* Editor Murray Boltinoff. The selection of The Emerald Archer and The Alien Ace as the headliners seemed to be more than just random. Green Arrow and Speedy had long been considered an imitation Batman and Robin, while J'onn J'onzz was looked on as a second-tier Superman, especially in the pages of *Justice League of America*, where the Martian rarely utilized his more esoteric, non-Superman-like powers.

Viewed in that light, "Wanted" comes across as an attempt by DC to duplicate the success of *World's Finest Comics*, which since 1954 had featured Superman and Batman working as a team. Bob Haney's script for *The Brave and the Bold* #50 establishes a logical reason for Green Arrow to seek out J'onn J'onzz' aid, balances their contributions to the defeat of the villains, and shows the heroes comfortable enough with each other to mutually divulge their identities. In fact, had Batman and Robin been substituted for The Ace Archers, Superman for Manhunter, and villains from Krypton for Martian criminals, "Wanted" would have read very much like a story from *World's Finest Comics*.

In fact, even more evocative of this feeling is the fact that Haney's script included a climax in which Green Arrow and Manhunter thwart the villains by exchanging costumes and posing as each other: a gimmick used by Superman and Batman in their very first *WFC* team-up, in *World's Finest Comics* #71 (Jul-Aug 54).

If a DC fan of the day was getting a hunch that *The Brave and the Bold* #50 was intended to be a tryout for making Green Arrow and J'onn J'onzz a team in the fashion of Batman and Superman, the story "Decoy Missions of the Justice League!" which came out in *JLA* #24 (Dec 63) — one month following *The Brave and the Bold* #50 — probably would have cinched the notion.

The details of "Decoy Missions" aren't important here, save to say that the villain, Kanjar Ro, tackled only part of The Justice League: Aquaman, Atom, Flash, Green Lantern, and Wonder Woman. During the course of his plot, the villain explained why he limited himself to five JLAers (italics mine):

"Since Superman and Batman — *and the newly formed team of J'onn J'onzz and Green Arrow* — are away from Earth at this time, I need not concern myself with them just now!"

This simple line determines one thing and carries significant implications.

Since at no time in "Wanted — the Capsule Master!" did Green Arrow leave Earth, the fact that "the newly formed team of J'onn J'onzz and Green Arrow" was *away* from Earth meant that there was an unpublished second adventure involving Martian Manhunter and Green Arrow, one which took them both off-planet.

Now, Gardner Fox maintained an exceptional attention to continuity in his *JLA* stories. Many of his *JLA* tales made references to what was going on in a particular member's own series at the time; sometimes, Fox even made a plot point of it in a *JLA* story. That makes it unlikely that Fox' mention of the "newly formed team" of Manhunter and Green Arrow was just an offhand remark.

I've always suspected that Fox was privy to plans by DC to create an ongoing Green Arrow-Manhunter team, contingent on the sales of *The Brave and the Bold* #50. If so, then evidently those sales weren't impressive enough and the idea was deep-sixed. But at the time of *JLA* #24, sales figures from *The Brave and the Bold* #50 would have barely started to come in, so the idea of an ongoing MM-GA team would still have been viable. And Fox would have been able to use it as a convenient excuse for excluding those two heroes from the main action in *JLA* #24.

In stating that J'onn J'onzz and Green Arrow were on an off-world mission, Fox may have just been referring to an "untold tale" of that "newly formed team." Or he might have been making reference to an actual story, one that was shelved after final sales figures from *The Brave and the Bold* #50 showed the idea didn't have as much promise as DC had hoped.

Either way, it seems clear that there was an idea in the wind to make an ongoing team of the two heroes.

Conspiracy Theory #2: A Military Maneuver

After successfully launching the team-up format, why did *The Brave and the Bold* suddenly revert to being a showcase title in #57 and #58? Movie producer Michael Uslan (*Batman, Swamp Thing*) and Grand Comics Database co-founder Robert Klein have said they think it was because G.I. Joe had DC at gunpoint.

In a foreword to *The Brave and the Bold Archives* Vol. 1, Uslan and Klein noted that, concurrent with Metamorpho's two-issue tryout in *The Brave and the Bold*, *Showcase* was running two issues headlining "G.I. Joe." There weren't any actual G.I. Joe stories back then; *Showcase* just reprinted old war comics packaged with new covers using the G.I. Joe logo, as a tie-in to Hasbro's launch of G.I. Joe action figures. This, they said, suggested something:

"Our best guess is that Hasbro made a deal with DC to publish two G.I. Joe tie-in comic books, and the schedule was demanding," they wrote in *The Brave and the Bold Archives*. "The books were thrown into *Showcase* at the last minute, bumping the two slated issues of Metamorpho. But now, what would DC do with these two Metamorpho books?"

Well, drop them into *The Brave and the Bold*, sayeth Uslan and Klein, bumping the team-up format for two issues.

Is it true? Who knows? But Uslan and Klein's theory fits all available facts, and, if it's not true, it's such a good story I choose to believe it.

There's nothing significant about "Revolt of the Super-Chicks," except how out of character (and amazingly sexist) I thought it was when I first read it — and even moreso now, as an adult.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #52 (Mar 64):** "Suicide Mission!" was the first time any of DC's war heroes teamed up — in this case Sgt. Rock, Haunted Tank, Lt. Johnny Cloud, and Mademoiselle Marie — and it must have worked, because they began running into each other in their own books from that point on, and some of them eventually formed a permanent team (The Losers). It was also one of the few *The Brave and the Bold* team-ups before #158 written by someone other than Haney — in this case Robert Kanigher, who was the godfather of all those war heroes.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #54 (Jul 64):** Though famous as the first appearance of The Teen Titans, it's less well known that the words "Teen Titans" never appeared anywhere on the cover or in the story. "The Thousand-and-One Dooms of Mr. Twister" was, in fact, intended as just a team-up of three kid sidekicks: Robin, Kid Flash, and Aqualad. The Teen Titans handle would come later ... about a year later, as we shall see.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #56 (Nov 64):** "Raid of the Mutant Marauders" was the second Martian Manhunter appearance in six issues — but his last in this title. The foreword to *Brave and the Bold Archives* Vol. 1 said these two star turns were in support of J'onn's new cover-featured series, which began in June 1964 (*House of Mystery* #143). But The Alien Ace never took off as hoped — he started getting booted off the cover of *HoM* by the juvenile "Dial 'H' for Hero" beginning in 1966 and lost his series altogether with *House of Mystery* #173 (Apr 68). The Manhunter's stock hit such a nadir that, in *Justice League of America* #71 (May 69), writer Denny O'Neil tossed J'onn completely out of the DC universe for a number of years!

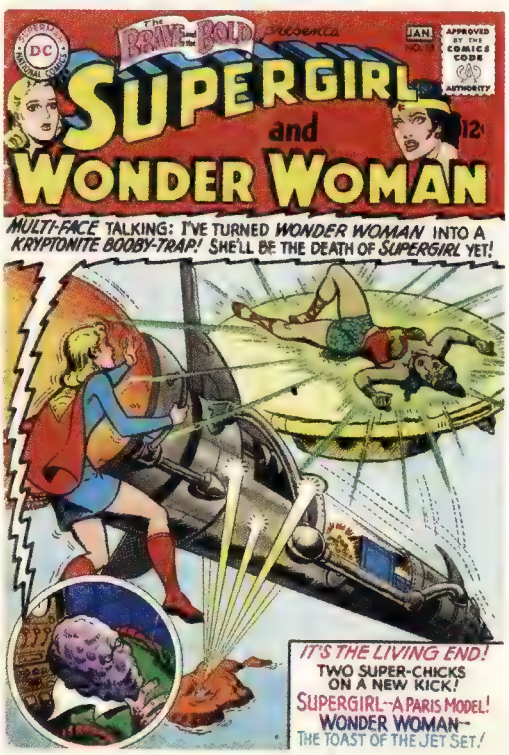
Which is in contradistinction to his partner in this issue, the more popular Flash, who co-starred five times in *The Brave and the Bold*'s first four years of team-ups, 10 times in all.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #57-58 (Jan and Mar 65):** "The Origin of Metamorpho" and "The Junk Yard of Doom" teamed Metamorpho with, uh, with ... say, these aren't team-ups at all! These two issues are a "showcase" kinda deal, introducing The Element Man! Howcum? Two comics experts suggest an answer in **Conspiracy Theory #2!**

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #60 (Jun-Jul 65):** Told you it wouldn't take long for the "Teen Titans" to make their official debut — and with an imaginary member, too. To see what I mean, see **Adventures on Earth-B #1: Wonder Girl!**

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #61-62 (Sep and Nov 65):** After the revelation in James Robinson's *Starman* about the sexual indiscretion between the Golden Age Black Canary and Starman that supposedly took place during these two adventures, The Captain gets asked a lot if there was any hint of the affair in either story — or if Robinson just made it all up. The answer? See **Conspiracy Theory #3!**

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #63 (Jan 66):** There's nothing significant about "Revolt of the Super-Chicks," except how out of character (and amazingly sexist) I thought it was when I first read it — and even moreso now, as an adult. In the story, both Supergirl and Wonder Woman decided they hated being super-heroines and were conveniently swept off their



Conspiracy Theory #3: Now *That's* a Team-Up!

Did James Robinson have any basis to imagine an affair between Dinah "Black Canary" Lance and Ted "Starman" Knight from their 1965 stories? The Captain's answer: Yes.

When *Showcase* #61-62 originally made their debuts, there was no reason for fans like me to question why Starman and Black Canary were suddenly teaming up. After all, the same scenario was occurring with Doctor Fate and Hourman over in *Showcase* at roughly the same time, and nobody wondered if *they* were having an affair. Clearly, Editor Julius Schwartz was testing the waters for reviving some of the JSA characters after their successful appearances in *Flash* and *Justice League of America*. And it was obvious to even youngsters like me that having twice the spandex in a single title was more likely to sell than either hero solo. So Ted and Dinah suddenly hanging out together raised no eyebrows.

Further, while it's true that that Blonde Bombshell and The Astral Avenger kept ditching Canary's husband, Larry Lance, at every opportunity, the young Cap'n saw nothing untoward in their behavior. After all, the book's cover read, "Brave and Bold Presents Starman and Black Canary," not, "Brave and Bold Presents Starman and Black Canary and Some Guy Named Larry Who Doesn't Have Super-Powers or Even a Costume and Is Really Boring." I had plunked my money down for the spandex duo, and that's what DC was giving me. Further, even the young Cap'n realized that the purpose of the book was to test the waters for a Starman-Black Canary ongoing title and that Editor Julius Schwartz and writer Gardner Fox wouldn't have a viable test, if some other guy kept hogging the spotlight. Heck, Dinah and Ted even ditched Wildcat in the second issue, and *he* had a costume! But Wildcat wasn't in the title, so the young Cap'n understood implicitly the editorial imperative of downplaying him and showcasing the title pair.

However, that's looking at the deal from the real world. But, if you look at it from within the story itself ... Well, why *were* Starman and Canary suddenly teaming up? They had shown no affinity before, in all those Justice Society stories. And why *were* Starman and Canary repeatedly ditching Dinah's husband? And why *were* they also avoiding Wildcat, a fellow JSA member whose help they surely could have used?

These actions made no sense within the story's internal logic. Until Robinson explained them, using Occam's Razor to suggest the likeliest motivation: sex.

Were Schwartz and Fox subtly implying a naughty liaison 40 years ago? Of course not — the very idea's ridiculous. But did a smart modern writer turn over an old editorial fiat and find gold underneath? Methinks he did.

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Adventures on Earth-B #1: Wonder Girl

The Robin-Kid Flash-Aqualad team-up in *The Brave and the Bold* #54 must have sold well, since the concept was revisited a year later in *The Brave and the Bold* #60, with a new name (Teen Titans) and a new member (Wonder Girl).

The only problem: Wonder Girl didn't exist.

When writer and editor Robert Kanigher took over *Wonder Woman* in the late '50s, he began experimenting to boost sales, and one of his experiments was to entice the elusive teen-age female market with stories set in the past, when The Amazing Amazon was herself a teenager (*Wonder Woman* #105, Apr 59). These "Wonder Girl" stories were followed by stories set even further in the past, starring "Wonder Tot." (Maybe he was going for the elusive toddler market.) Then came the aptly named "Impossible Stories" series (beginning in *Wonder Woman* #124, Aug 61), in which Wonder Woman and her two past selves, Wonder Girl and Wonder Tot, plus her mom, Queen Hippolyta, would all star in apocryphal adventures together as the "Wonder Family!"

Preposterous, sure. But it was all in fun, the

Wonder Girl's first appearance as a Teen Titan in Brave and the Bold #60 (Jul 65) didn't acknowledge her "impossible" status, causing further confusion.

stories were charming (if "impossible"), and no Amazons were injured during filming.

But then, boom: Wonder Girl abruptly appeared in *The Brave and the Bold* #60. And, incredibly, everyone seemed to know her!

The real-world story is that Bob Haney was looking for a female sidekick to diversify this new team of sidekicks and had heard of or maybe just seen Wonder Girl — but didn't know, or didn't care, that she wasn't a sidekick at all, but Wonder Woman herself from the past. The same Wonder Woman who, all grown up, was being published simultaneously in her own title and *Justice League of America*. Which, y'know, doesn't make a lick of sense.

Worse, Kanigher soon decided to toss out all his own Wonder-baggage (including Wonder Girl), and set the adult character's adventures in World War II, beginning in *Wonder Woman* #159 (Nov 66). That made Wonder Girl *doubly* impossible: Not only was she not appearing in any DC comics at all, but she had been retconned out of existence!

And yet, inexplicably, she was still a founding member of the newly launched *Teen Titans*, where fans kept badgering Editor George Kashdan for info on this impossible "Wonder Chick." A backstory. An origin. A name. *Anything*. Which, unfortunately, he didn't have.

"Originally, Wonder Girl was supposed to be Wonder Woman when she was younger," Kashdan confessed in *Teen Titans* #7 (Feb 67). "But our W.G. is an up-to-date, 1967-model teen-ager. So what's her relation to W.W.? Anybody got any ideas?"

Well, that wasn't encouraging.

Eventually a stab was taken at an origin (*Teen Titans* #22, Aug 69), which gave her a name (Donna Troy) and a sketchy backstory (orphaned baby rescued from fire by Wonder Woman and raised on Amazon Island). But it didn't quite take, which launched a cascade of "Who is Donna Troy?" revamps over the decades, with each succeeding origin more convoluted, confusing, and headache-inducing than the last. To this day, I can't easily explain who or what Donna Troy is, and I try not to, lest I force my audience's heads to explode.

So we can thank Bob Haney for giving us an ongoing Wonder Girl at all. But it would have saved a lot of gray hairs for his successors (and the readers), if he'd bothered with a little research!

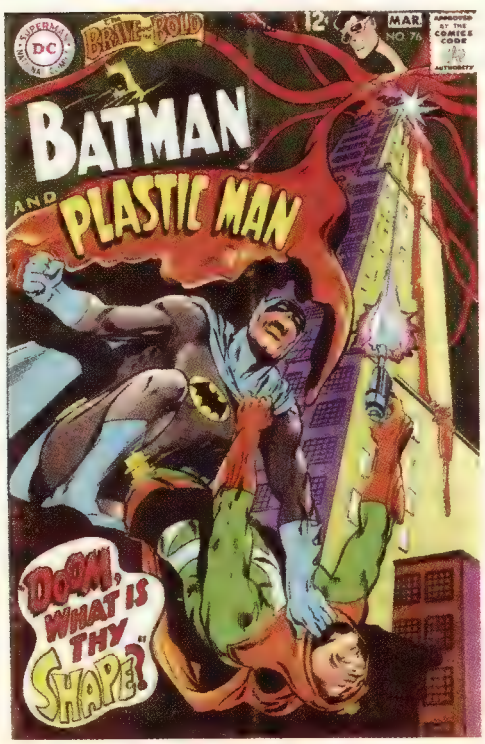
feet by handsome men (Wonder Woman with a single kiss), giving up their super-identities to be ornaments on some guy's arm. And they jumped through all sorts of hoops to avoid letting their new beaus know they had super-powers, because, if they were strong, they wouldn't be "feminine"! That was really the whole story, despite a *pro forma* super-villain. The cover blurb is indicative of the story's depth and sensitivity: "It's the living end! Two super-chicks on a new kick! Supergirl — a Paris model! Wonder Woman — the toast of the jet set!" They sure don't make 'em like that any more.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #67 (Sep 66):** Coinciding with the advent of the *Batman* TV show, The Dark Knight began his reign as the permanent host of *The Brave and the Bold* in "The Death of The Flash" ... almost. (Pssst, ***Spoiler Alert***: The Scarlet Speedster didn't really die.)

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #72-73 (Jul and Sep 67):** For some reason, The Gotham Guardian was absent in these two issues, which star Spectre-Flash and Aquaman-Atom, respectively. I have absolutely no idea why this Batless detour was taken — Were they inventory issues? Were these stories bumped by Metamorpho two years earlier? Was DC worried about over-exposing Batman? — but, if anybody has any **Conspiracy Theories**, I'm all ears.

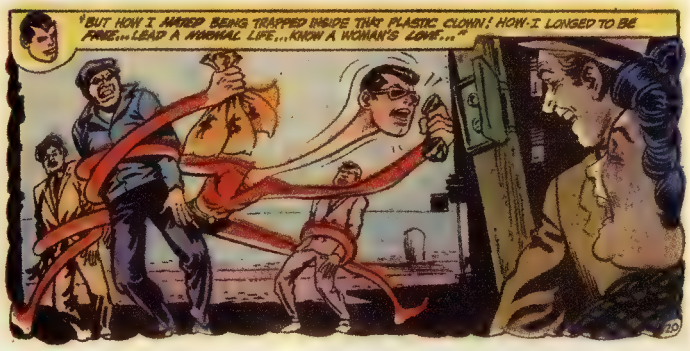
And, yes, Batman took over for good with the next issue (#74), playing host of every issue until the series' cancellation with #200.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #76 (Mar 67):** From 1941 to 1956, Jack Cole's Plastic Man was star of a light-hearted ongoing feature



Adventures on Earth-B #2: Plastic Man

As noted, the first Bob Haney Plastic Man story was more or less consistent with the character's previous appearances. But before long, the Haneyverse took one of the funniest characters in comicdom and turned him into a complete downer.



As in *The Brave and the Bold* #95 (May 71), in which a lonely Eel O'Brian tires of being "an out-dated freak" and tries to find true love (with the wealthy "Ruby Ryder") — only to discover his intended is a *bad person.* Discouraged and vengeful, The Pliable Policeman embarks on a complicated (and improbable) scheme to frame Ruby for his own murder, while committing murder several times himself to protect Batman from other murderers, because ... oh, forget it. Batman somehow forgot all about those murders, too, (not to mention Plas almost sending an innocent woman to the electric chair), so it really doesn't matter.

Then there's *The Brave and the Bold* #123 (Dec 75), in which a down-and-out Plastic Man ("Yeah, my heart was broken, my spirit crushed! I quit my last job in a cheap carnival! Couldn't stand the yokels yukking at me!") impersonates Batman while Bruce Wayne is out of town but is brainwashed by Ruby Ryder (her again!) with a "plastic catalyst" and frames Bruce Wayne for murder (that old trick again!), which is foiled by the (inexplicable) intervention of Rex "Metamorpho" Mason, who pretends to be a lawyer and somehow knows Bruce Wayne is Batman, and then there's a fight,

and, um, ah ... well, somehow it all makes sense and ends well. Sorta.

Finally, there's *The Brave and the Bold* #148 (Mar 79), where Plas is still depressed and gets a seasonal job as Santa Claus (perfect job for a manic depressive), only to be knocked out by a blackjack ...

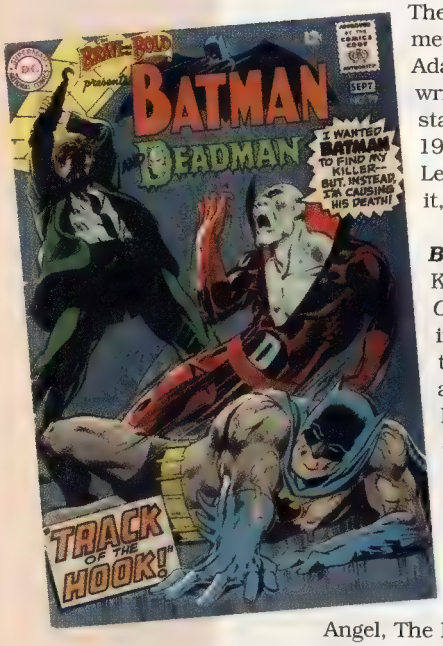
OK, I have to stop there. Plastic Man — *a man made of plastic* — defeated by a blow to his non-existent skull. That's it. We're done.

Thankfully, Grant Morrison and Mark Waid restored The Ductile Detective's happy-go-lucky personality (and resistance to head injuries) in *JLA* and stopped that spinning noise coming from Jack Cole's grave.

played mostly for laughs at Quality Comics. When DC gained the rights and re-launched the series in 1966, the new *Plastic Man* was consistent with its predecessor in tone and intent (if not quite as inventive).

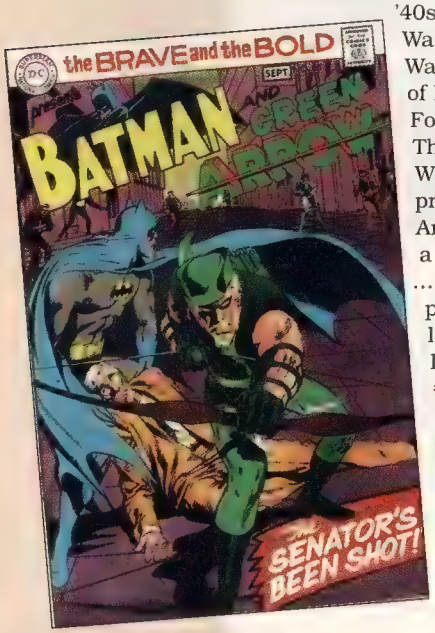
And — when Bob Haney used the Stretchable Sleuth in "Doom, What Is Thy Shape?" — he more or less continued in the humorous vein, which was not to last. Before long, the Haneyverse was giving us a manic-depressive Plastic Man who was about as entertaining as plastic surgery. For more, see **Adventures on Earth-B #2: Plastic Man!**

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #79 (Sep 68):** The beginning of a short but memorable run by artist Neal Adams, "Track of the Hook," written by Haney and co-starring Deadman, won the 1968 Alley Award for Best Full-Length Story. And it deserved it, too.



• ***The Brave and the Bold* #81 (Jan 69):** When Kurt Busiek's *Power Company* made its debut in 2002, it was hinted that the invulnerable Bork had appeared before. Well, here's his debut, in the oddly but aptly named "But Bork Can Hurt You," co-starring The Flash. Does Busiek know his comics history, or what?

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #84 (Jul 69):** Guest-starring Sgt. Rock, "The Angel, The Rock and The Cowl" depicted today's Bruce Wayne fondly remembering a World War II adventure with Rock ... although somehow Wayne hadn't aged at all, despite being shown to have been Batman in the early '40s, which was never explained. Was he frozen in an iceberg? Was it time-travel? The Batman of Earth-2? Nick Fury's Infinity Formula? An LSD flashback? This was exacerbated when Wayne met Frank Rock in the present of 1969, and the intrepid Army sergeant declared he was a "30-year man," with gray hair ... while Wayne was in the same panel, still 30-*ish* and spry as leprechaun. What was going on here? **Adventures on Earth-B #3: Sgt. Rock**, that's what.



• ***The Brave and the Bold* #85 (Sep 69):** "The Senator's Been Shot" is justly famous as the first appearance of Green Arrow's modern costume, courtesy of Neal Adams. What's not as well known is that The Battling Bowman still had the same old vanilla personality, courtesy of Bob Haney. The loudmouthed liberal persona we know and love today was still blossoming over in *Justice League of America*, courtesy of Denny O'Neil, and didn't appear here. I just wanted to warn those Amazing Arbolester fans who think this issue launched the new Ollie Queen: Sorry, kids, only the costume was revamped, and the new attitude would have to wait for The Emerald Archer's next appearance.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #87 (Jan 70):** One of two issues co-starring Wonder Woman in her "Diana Rigg" phase, this was another rare appearance of a writer other than Bob Haney in *The Brave and the Bold*'s first 16 years as a team-up title. "The Widow-Maker" was written and drawn by Mike Sekowsky, who was doing similar duty on The Amazing Amazon's own book.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #88 (May 70):** "Count 10 ... and Die" is a famous Haneyverse story — the first of several issues to co-star the Batman of Earth-1 with the Wildcat of Earth-2, with no explanation whatsoever. Which is all the excuse I need for: **Adventures on Earth-B #4: Wildcat!**

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #91 (Sep 70):** I only mention "A Cold Corpse for the Collector" because it co-starred Black Canary and it was drawn by Nick Cardy. What can I say? As a healthy, heterosexual male, I vividly remember *every* time Nick Cardy drew Black Canary. I make no apologies.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #95 (May 71):** The cover promised Batman co-starring with "?" — one of the three times *The Brave and the Bold* had Batman co-starring with "?" Only it was a different "?" each time. This issue it was Plastic Man; in *The Brave and the Bold* #106 it was Two-Face; and in #150 it was Superman. Just so's you know.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #100 (Mar 71):** A guest-star extravaganza, with Green Lantern, Green Arrow, Black Canary, and Robin (the only time the Boy Wonder was cover-billed). I mention "The Warrior in a Wheel-Chair" because it was a prime example of how naturally The Dark Knight seemed to work with Canary and Green Arrow in this title (and *Justice League of America* during the same era) — and I've always wondered if that influenced the writers of all those Elseworlds (like *Kingdom Come*) that show Batman, Green Arrow, and Black Canary as natural allies in every awful dystopia in which they find themselves. The comics of this era certainly had that effect on me, since this JLA trio is still joined at the hip in my head.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #115 (Nov 74):** The Legion of Superfluous Heroes had to remind me about "The Corpse That Wouldn't Die" (See: **The Brave and the Bold Fun #2: The Legionnaires Speak**), because I must have erased this Batman-Atom team-up from

Adventures on Earth-B #3: Sgt. Rock

So *The Brave and the Bold* #84 established Sgt. Rock and Batman as contemporaries, despite a 30-year age difference, and (somehow!) 35-year-old Bruce Wayne as a World War II veteran. It's like Albert Pujols running into Stan Musial and both reminiscing about their triple-A days together. How did this happen? A dream? A hoax? An Imaginary Story? Nope, just a typical jaunt around the Haneyverse ... and it just gets wilder:

• In *The Brave and the Bold* #96 (Jun-Jul 71), young Bruce and old Frank still remember serving in World War II together, only now Rock has a buff build by artist Nick Cardy and blond hair instead of gray (despite calling himself, again, a "30-year man"). He's also very un-Rock-like, depressed and angry because the Army won't let him re-up. "He's really bitter — beaten down," thinks Wayne. "Never thought I'd see the Rock of Easy like this."

Me, neither.

• *The Brave and the Bold* #108 (Aug-Sep 73) continues the spiral into silliness by dragging the supernatural into it, in "The Night Batman Sold His Soul!" In this episode of "The Impossible Adventures of Bruce and Frank," Rock's back to being a gray-haired old man, and a loony one, convinced he's on the trail of Adolf Hitler. Plus, he and Easy Co. run around in World War II uniforms with Thompson submachine guns despite, y'know, better equipment being available now and, uh, the little problem of carrying automatic weaponry on city streets being kinda illegal. And The Dark Knight Detective, despite being half Rock's age, isn't making much sense, either — he's convinced he's chasing Satan.

And why not? They're both already obviously crazy, since they still seem to believe they've known each other for more years than Wayne has been alive. Also, for no reason I can see, Frank suddenly knows that Bruce is Batman.

• *The Brave and the Bold* #117 (Feb-Mar 75) continues the pattern of making Rock look brain-damaged, by having him chase the ghost of a dead G.I. from World War II — and of Batman immediately believing the worst of his "old friend." Again! "Hard to believe," The Dark Knight thinks, "but it looks like the Rock of Easy has cracked!" Y'know, Sarge, with friends like that ...

At least, this one omits Bruce Wayne altogether and doesn't pretend that he served with Rock in The Big One. No mention of whether Frank knows who's behind the mask, so let's pretend he doesn't. It's just easier that way.

• What can I say about *The Brave and the Bold* #124 (Jan 76), starring Batman, Sgt. Rock, writer Bob Haney, Editor Murray Boltinoff, and artist Jim Aparo? Well, I can say it's surreal, as it breaks the fourth wall with all those real people inhabiting their own story. And it gets metaphysical: When terrorists capture Aparo, they force him to draw things that then immediately happen to Batman ... who is in the same story they are. Does that mean comic-book characters in the Haneyverse know they're comic-book characters? Are their lives predestined by writers like Bob Haney, instead of a Calvinist God? Will my head explode, if I keep thinking about this?

• In what amounts to a rehash of "The Night Batman Sold His Soul," *Brave and the Bold Special* #1 (actually *DC Special Series*, Vol. 2, #8, 1978) depicts Rock and Easy back in World War II uniforms, as they and Batman chase Satan (who actually makes an appearance this time). They're abetted by Deadman, Rama Kushna, and — this is a head-scratcher — the ghost of Sherlock Holmes. No, don't think about it.

However, things are improving on the continuity front. While Rock still refers to "my old buddy Batman," the story ("Hell Is for Heroes!") doesn't say or imply that they served in World War II together.

• And, with *The Brave and the Bold* #162 (May 80), we're out of the Haneyverse and back in our reality — and just in time, since it's the last of the Rock & Cowl team-ups. This story takes place on Earth-2 in 1944, and, with that simple solution, all the age discrepancies are waved away and internal logic is maintained. "Operation: Time Bomb!" also makes a reference to the first Rock-Bats team-up in *The Brave and the Bold* #84, thereby dragging that anomaly into Earth-2 continuity. It doesn't quite fit — there's just too much internal contradiction in "The Angel, The Rock and The Cowl!" to salvage it — but it's a game effort by writer Bill Kelley.

my frontal lobe. With Brill-O pads. See, in this story Batman was deceased, so The Mighty Mite ran around *in his brain*, stomping on various cranial parts to move The Dead Knight around like a zombie. Which eventually somehow resurrected him. Or something.

"Corpse" has got to be an 11 on the 10-point Yuck Scale (and a 12 on the Silly Scale). And besides, we now know from Brad Meltzer's *Identity Crisis* that running around in someone's brain at Atom-ic size is fatal. Or ought to be. Yuck!

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #117 (Mar 75):** After 20 years, *The Brave and the Bold* finally went monthly! Woo-hoo! (For the record, this issue's "Nightmare without End" co-starred Sgt. Rock.)

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #120 (Jul 75):** This was just one of two times that Batman somehow teamed up with Kamandi, who lives in a dystopic future. And it's not the only time Batman time-traveled in *The Brave and the Bold* to meet a co-star (like Scalphunter in #171 or The Legion of Super-Heroes in #179), or someone time-traveled to co-star with him (like Kamandi in #157). Although, I must say, in some Bob Haney stories it's hard to tell if time-travel is involved or not (See **Adventures on Earth-B: Sgt. Rock**).

It's also possible that Batman is dimension-hopping, too, since Kamandi's future isn't necessarily ours. But going from one Earth to another isn't unusual in this title, either; witness Batman's team-up with the Earth-2 Robin (#182) and the Earth-2 Batman (sorta, #200). But, again, sometimes it's hard to tell in the Haneyverse whether dimension-hopping is involved or not. (See: **Adventures on Earth-B: Wildcat**.) I'm not sure where I'm going with this, but it was fun to think about.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #124 (Jan 76):** "Small War of the Super Rifles" is one of the most memorable *Brave and the Bolds* ever, if my message board is to be believed. See **Adventures on Earth-B #3: Sgt. Rock** and **The Legionnaires Speak** for why.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #131 (Dec 76):** "Take 7 Steps to ... Wipe-Out!" seems to be a memorable one among the Legionnaires also, but not because of its excellence. Rather, the reverse. In this idiotic tale, Bat-foe Catwoman acts completely out of character by becoming an ambassador from another country (and a hired killer), much to the consternation of The Caped Crusader and Wonder Woman. It also used the creaky "rare drug that fakes death" ploy, The Feline Fatale having unexplained and near mystical control over jungle cats, an outdated plot (by at least 20 years) involving code-breaking machines like Enigma, and microfilm (yes, *microfilm*) being hidden in the fuel of the Amazing Amazon's invisible plane, because, according to WW, "The fuel is the only visible part of it!"

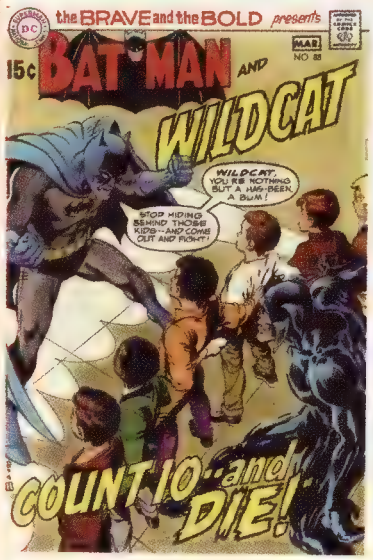
Oh, right. Not very invisible, then, is it?

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #139 (Jan 78):** Something about "Requiem for a Top Cop" puzzled me when it first came out, almost 30 years ago. A cover blurb announced of the Batman-Hawkman team-up: "Together — for the first time in 10 years!" And, sure enough, the last time The Winged Wonder had co-starred in *The Brave and the Bold* had been more than a decade previous, in *The Brave and the Bold* #70 (Mar 67).

What puzzled the young Cap'n was twofold:

1) While The Feathered Fury hadn't been in *The Brave and the Bold* for 10 years, it wasn't as if he and Batman didn't share adventures elsewhere, like *Justice League of America*.

Adventures on Earth-B #4: Wildcat



What makes *The Brave and the Bold* #88 confusing is that the Batman of the story is clearly "our" Earth-1 Batman, but the Wildcat appears to be from Earth-2 — with no explanation for how that came to be. In fact, the two heroes act as if they're long-time friends — which fans at the time "knew" to be impossible, since the Earth-2 Wildcat didn't make his Silver Age debut until *The Brave and the Bold* #62 (with Starman and Black Canary, Nov 65) and didn't appear to meet The Gotham Goliath until *Justice League of America* #46 (Aug 66).

Now, if this were the Earth-2 Batman, it could make sense, but it clearly wasn't — this Dark Knight was too young to have been in World War II, like the other Earth-2 heroes in these pre-Super Squad days. Besides, the E-2 Batman was retired by 1970 (as established in *Justice League of America* #55, Aug 67) and married with a daughter (which this Batman isn't). So this is inarguably the Earth-1 Batman.

But the Wildcat of this story appears to be from Earth-2. He's old enough (retired, hair gray at the temples) to be a World War II vet and he seems to be in the same circumstance as the Wildcat depicted in *The Spectre* #3 (Apr 68), which was an Earth-2 series.

What's a fanboy to think? Especially when the situation repeats itself — Haney was a boxing fan and loved using Wildcat — in *The Brave and the Bold* #97 (Sep 71), #110 (Jan 74), #118 (Apr 75), and #127 (Jan 76). All the while an identical Wildcat was active on Earth-2 in JLA-JSA team-ups.

But wait! What's this I see? Denny O'Neil teamed Wildcat with The Creeper (who's never been anything but Earth-1) in *Super-Team Family* #2 (Jan 75)? Huzzah! So it's not just in the Haneyverse we have an ersatz Ted Grant!

Maybe we can now assume there was an Earth-1 Wildcat before *Crisis on Infinite Earths* made it all moot. And that must have been the Wildcat depicted in these five Haneyverse team-ups (and one *Super-Team Family* story), a Wildcat who is more or less identical to his Earth-2 counterpart, even down to his age. And, even though he seems to be old friends with Batman, we've only seen him six times.

OK, it's not a great theory. But it's workable. So now I can safely read and reread these stories without first vibrating myself through the dimensional barrier to Earth-B. Whew!

The Brave and the Bold Fun #1: Return Engagements

As the star of *The Brave and the Bold* for most of its team-up run, Batman had the most appearances: 134 (out of 151 issues, which ain't too shabby). Green Arrow was a distant #2, with 11.

But who else was popular enough for one or more encores? Some of them are pretty surprising. After all, whodathunk The Metal Men were significant enough to merit nine bookings? Or that Martian Manhunter would be relegated to only two, none after 1964?

Here's the list of characters with cover billing in *The Brave and the Bold* #50-200, in descending number of appearances:

10: The Flash
9: Metal Men
8: The Atom
7: Black Canary, Metamorpho, Sgt. Rock, Wonder Woman
6: Aquaman, Green Lantern, Teen Titans
5: Hawkman, The Joker, The Spectre, Wildcat
4: Deadman, Plastic Man
3: Adam Strange, Creeper, Mister Miracle, Phantom Stranger, Supergirl, Two-Face
2: The Demon, Kamandi, Man-Bat, Martian Manhunter, Nemesis (Tom Tresser), Rose and Thorn, Starman (Earth-2), Swamp Thing

For the record, there were 33 guest stars who costarred only once (including big guns like Superman, Robin, and Doctor Fate). And you can tote up one more appearance each for The Dark Knight, Deadman, and Sgt. Rock, if you count the 1978 *Brave and the Bold Special* (*DC Special Series*, Vol. 2, #8) — which, for the purposes of this list, I'm not.

And it wasn't as if those of us in Readerland were starved for the opportunity to see them together. So was it really a selling point?

2) Why were they pridefully pointing out that The Pinioned Paladin wasn't popular enough to be a co-star for almost 11 years? That's not something *I'd* brag about.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #146 (Jan 79):** "The Secret That Saved a World" co-starred The Unknown Soldier, and for once we didn't have to go to Earth-B. It's an Earth-2 story, set in World War II with the original Dark Knight. Whew!

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #157 (Dec 79):** This was Bob Haney's final regular issue of *The Brave and the Bold*, and, as much as I poke fun at the Haneyverse, it's with affection. Maybe everyone in the Haneyverse did use the same expression, but, blue blazes, it sure was fun!

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #167 (Oct 80):** "Ice Station Alpha" was another World War II story (co-starring Blackhawk) set on Earth-2, so once again I didn't have to strain any brain cells wondering about the premise. Toward the end of the series, this became almost a trend.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #175 (Jun 81):** "The Heart of the Monster" co-starred Lois Lane. I always wondered what Kal-El thought about his playboy buddy "teaming up" with his girlfriend. (See **Conspiracy Theory #3: Now *That's* a Team-Up!** for why Supey should be concerned.)

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #182 (Jan 82):** Alan Brennert's "Interlude on Earth-Two," co-starring the adult Robin of that world, is justly famed as one of the best *Brave and the Bold* stories. See **The Legionnaires Speak** for comment.

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #197 (Apr 83):** "The Autobiography of Bruce Wayne" was, according to the splash page, "a very special tale of the Golden Age Batman." And, y'know, it really was. Brennert and Joe Staton showed us how the original Dark Knight Detective married Catwoman (the official co-star), and I swear it would bring tears from a stone. This may be my personal favorite, and the Legionnaires recommend it in **The Legionnaires Speak.**

• ***The Brave and the Bold* #200 (Jul 83):** "Smell of Brimstone, Stench of Death" co-starred the Batman of Earth-2 (sorta), as Mike W. Barr and Dave Gibbons danced *The Brave and the Bold* off the stage with a show-stopper. We saw an Earth-2 super-villain battle Batman in his heyday (drawn in Golden Age style), but, when said super-villain misses his chance to kill the original Dark Knight, he travels to Earth-1 to have his revenge by killing the closest equivalent — our Bat-guy. Included was a Bat-Mite short and a *Batman and The Outsiders* preview. This final issue was one of the best *The Brave and the Bolds* ever, which just reinforced how much we fans would miss the title.

"Notice how often Aparo will let Batman be upstaged by the action, yet still make him the center of the composition."
— *Puxley*

The Brave and the Bold Fun #2: The Legionnaires Speak!

I've had my say about *The Brave and the Bold*, but how did it strike other fans? I asked for opinions on my message board, and, boy, is the Legion of Superfluous Heroes full of them!

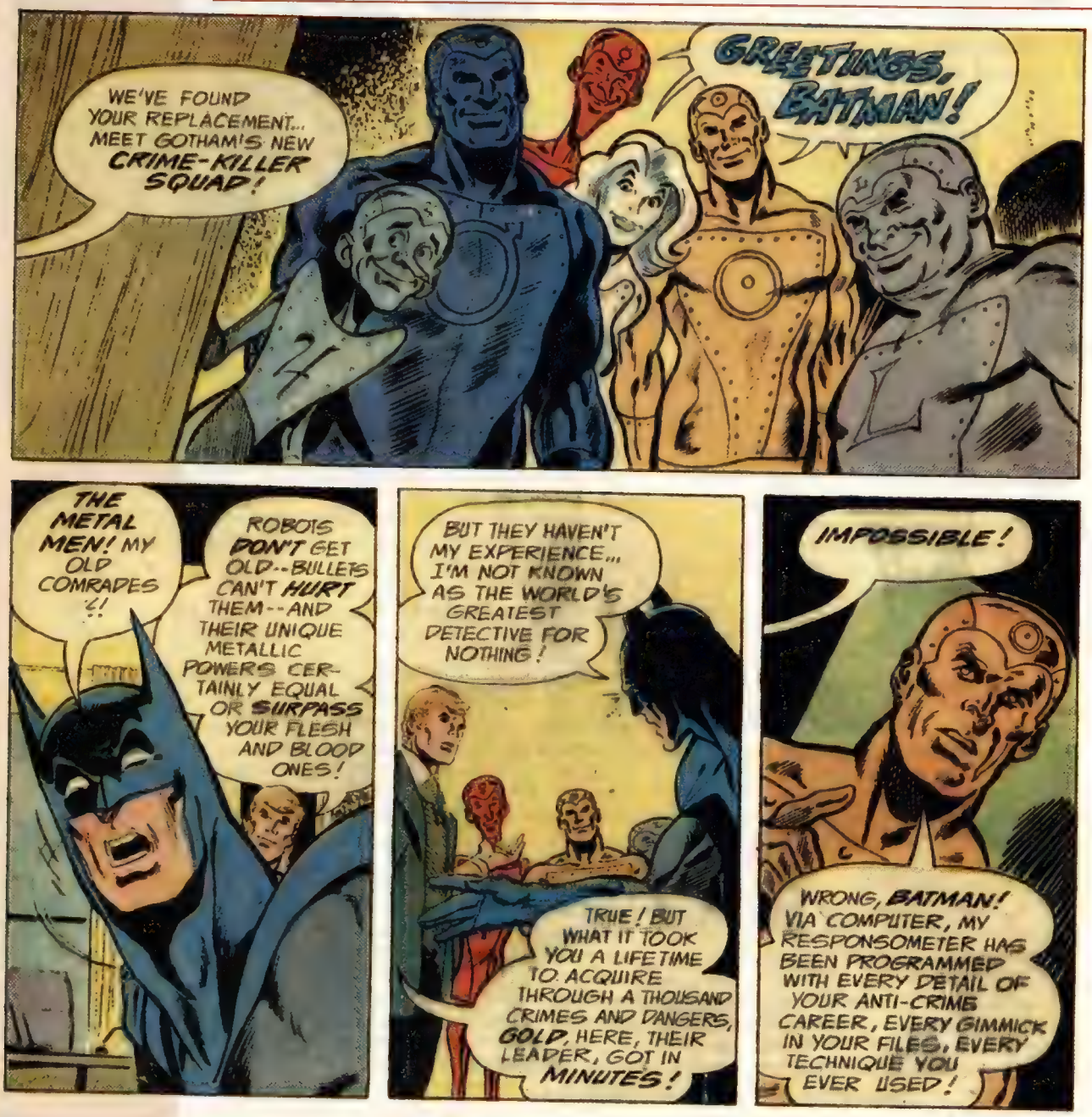
Here are two views of the Atom-Batman team-up in *The Brave and the Bold* #115, "The Corpse That Wouldn't Die," with the Lilliputian Lawman line-dancing in The Dark Knight's brainpan:

Robert Bienvenu, Baton Rouge, LA: "If DC published 10 titles like that, I would buy all 10. That's the kind of comic that people hold up in a comics shop and say, 'Oh, man, you've got to read this book.' "

Doc Beechler, Indianapolis, IN: "I like a crazy-dumb story every once in a while ... but, if most super-comics continued in that way, I don't think super-hero books would have survived."

So, clearly, opinions about *The Brave and the Bold* can be mixed.

Here's one that isn't. After explaining his love of team-up books, **Puxley of Tucson, AZ**, wrote, "I was a *The Brave and the Bold* reader



throughout the '70s, and it always makes me think first of Jim Aparo. Lots of other artists had their hand in it over the years, but Aparo drew a special kind of Batman that seemed well-suited to a shared universe. His Batman had weight and character, never losing the 'Dark Knight Detective' look by keeping him lean and often cloaked in shadow, but still vibrant and realistic enough to stand alongside his wide range of guest-stars.

"Notice how often Aparo will let Batman be upstaged by the action, yet still make him the center of the composition. It lets you see what is going on, while keeping you always aware of Batman and making you anxious for his next move.

"Jim Aparo — what a great artist. *Noir* landscapes. Pretty girls. Fight scenes with punches that made your teeth hurt. That's great comics, baby.

"I liked *The Brave and the Bold* not only for providing my favorite kind of Batman, but also for letting me read stories with great characters that I didn't read about elsewhere — The Metal Men, Metamorpho, Ra's al Ghul, Black Canary, Green Arrow, Wildcat, Sgt. Rock. There were many characters that were either introduced to me, or totally defined, by their *Brave and the Bold* appearances.

"I just read a great issue featuring one of the Sgt. Rock team-ups, with a classic Green Arrow reprint, and it was terrific from cover to cover. And, for the record: The Easy Co. Joe known as Bulldozer not only gets the drop on Batman in an alley, he knocks The Masked Manhunter out cold with one punch. Ka-pow!"

Ka-pow, indeed. **Tim Cousar of Southwest Tennessee** agreed: "The Aparo Batman is *my* Batman. *The Brave and the Bold* was one of the first three comics I started buying on a regular basis. If the other stars were out of character, I didn't know it at that time. I just knew that I loved that comic. I do wish we had seen an Aparo-drawn team-up of Batman and Captain Marvel, though."

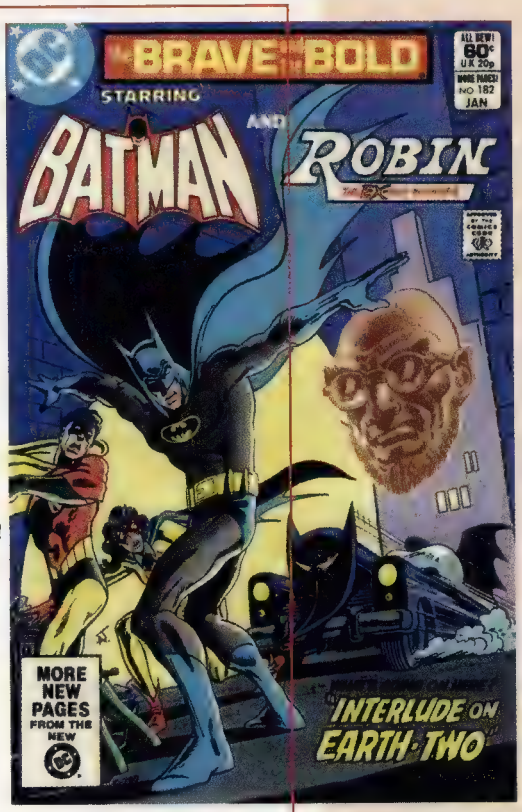
OK, this Aparo guy was popular. But what about the writing?

Detective445 of Houston, Texas, said, "*The Brave and the Bold* was one of my favorite titles as a kid, and my favorite issues were those written by Alan Brennert — especially 'Interlude on Earth-2' (*The Brave and the Bold* #182), which features Batman teaming with the Earth-2 adult Robin to battle Hugo Strange in one of the all-time classic Earth-1-Earth-2 crossover stories. Man, I miss Earth-2!"

Don't we all, 'Tec. But, speaking of *The Brave and the Bold* writers, **Kelvin Childs of Baltimore, Md.**, tackles the Haneyverse:

"Well, I liked *The Brave and the Bold* under Bob Haney, because it tried its best — and often succeeded — in delivering good, solid, entertaining Done in One comics.

"Its continuity hiccups — for example, a Batman-Sgt. Rock team-up set during World War II and another several issues later set in contemporary times — don't bother me, because where the story fit in continuity was *left up to the reader*. If you wanted to make the story fit, you could; if you wanted to ignore it, you could; if you wanted to think of it as an Elseworlds or Imaginary Story, hey, that's your call!



"The Brave and the Bold was one my favorite titles as a kid, and my favorite issues were those written by Alan Brennert — especially 'Interlude on Earth-2' (The Brave and the Bold #182)."
— Detective445

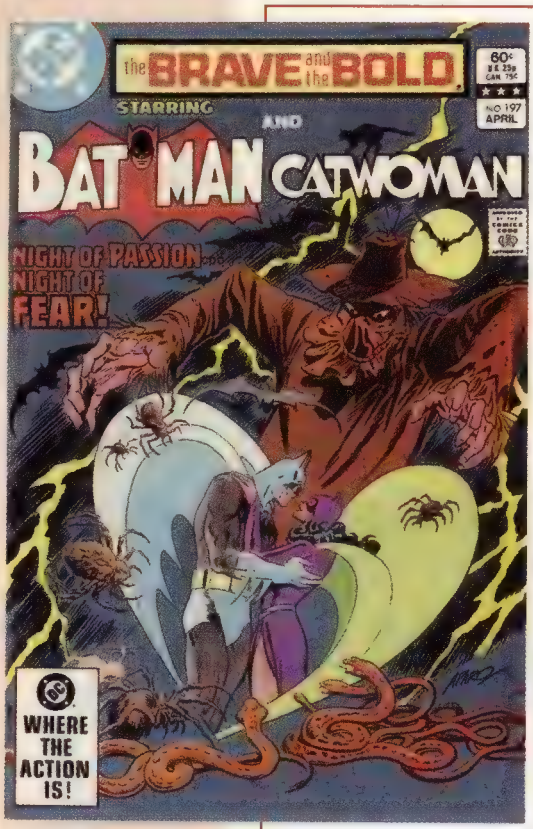
"And, of course, Haney's *Brave and the Bold* gave us those endearingly goofy tales that are impossible to forget, like the one with The Atom scampering around in Batman's brain (*The Brave and the Bold* #115) and a Sgt. Rock team-up in which the villains came to life and *told Jim Aparo what to draw* (*The Brave and the Bold* #124)!

"Speaking of Jim Aparo, he was one of Batman's best artists. Period."

But did everyone love Haney? **Luke Blanchard of Australia** wrote: "Actually, I've a foot in both the pro-Haney and anti-Haney camps. My initial response to his work was negative, but I developed a taste for it. How much his style contributed to making *Brave and Bold* and *World's Finest* work can be seen by how bland (at times worse) they became after he was gone.

"Why didn't I like his work at first? His stories often used to leave me with a feeling that things were happening illogically. Characters sometimes behaved out of character. Big stuff would happen and be forgotten at the end of the story. He'd frustrate his heroes in frustrating ways. (Nowadays, I don't see this as a drawback, but I didn't like it as a kid.) His villains are rarely very interesting, and there's often a lack of character-based drama. In some of his stories what the villains are up to is wholly forgettable.

"On the plus side, he did stuff no one else would do and wrote the Superman-Batman relationship well. (In his stories, they argue a lot and are sometimes at cross-purposes, so it isn't the Silver Age version; but I like it for what it was — their differences make for an interesting dynamic without Superman simply



being dumbed down.) I'm cooler toward his work from the '60s than his work from the '70s, but I genuinely like many of his Metamorpho stories."

Well, Luke, if you liked the wacky *Metamorpho* series, then I must consider you a Haney fan, whatever your protestations. Which, overall, was the consensus on the Captain Comics board:

Robert Bienvenu, Baton Rouge, La., wrote, "*Brave and the Bold* ... served as a showcase for the entire DC universe.

"As the popularity of super-hero comics fluctuated throughout the '70s and '80s, fans could find their temporarily homeless heroes in *The Brave and the Bold*. Metal Men, Metamorpho, Wildcat, Green Arrow, Phantom Stranger, Mister Miracle ... all enjoyed a brief moment in the spotlight, as they teamed with one of the world's most popular super-heroes.

"*The Brave and the Bold* also shone as a vehicle to introduce characters to a broader audience. A super-hero snob might purchase the comic for Batman but find that he enjoyed The Unknown Soldier. This book was some Batman fan's first exposure to Kirby characters such as Kamandi or The Demon — or his first trip into The House of Mystery.

"I've already bored this board with my admiration for Bob Haney's imagination and my love of Jim Aparo's talent and work ethic. Looking back at one of my favorite comics series from my childhood, I now realize that the greatest team-up of all was the long partnership of those two creative legends."

Brian of Amityville, N.Y., chimed in with, "I love the original *The Brave and the Bold*, even though it was canceled before I started collecting. Bob Haney was an incredibly imaginative writer. I love how his stories were always rooted in real-world problems and emotions, rather than arcane continuity and super-hero/super-villain brawls. Batman has been my favorite character since childhood, and Haney's depiction of him is one of my favorites. He has all the traits that make up the quintessential Batman for me but at the same time he's completely human. His Batman didn't win every fight, but that didn't make him any less of a hero. A lot of his stories also had a real David Lynch-style surrealism that I wish there was more of in comics today.

"Jim Aparo's art was *beautiful* on the book. It's a shame that a lot of people my age only know Aparo from his later run on the main *Batman* title, which was suffocated by Mike DeCarlo inking. His *The Brave and the Bold* stuff that he also inked and lettered himself is some of the best-looking comics ever.

"I know the book was unpopular with some fans in the '70s because of continuity mistakes, but, honestly, are the ideas of an Earth-1 Wildcat or Sgt. Rock surviving World War II that big of a deal? I do understand the outcry over the Batman-Wonder Woman-Catwoman issue (*The Brave and the Bold* #131) — showing Catwoman as a killer for hire is totally antithetical to her character, though it seems to me that she appeared so infrequently in those days that a writer could screw up her characterization easily.

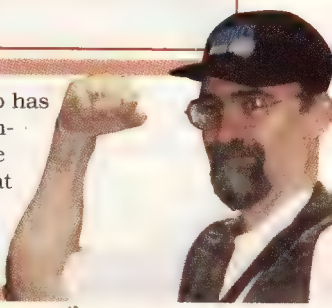
"I also love the later issues written by Alan Brennert. Those stories are masterpieces! The ones involving Earth-2 ('Interlude on Earth-2' and 'The Autobiography of Bruce Wayne' in #182 and #197, respectively) I think are the best argument in favor of the multiverse's continued existence. If Brennert could use the multiverse concept to such brilliant effect, why couldn't DC's other writers? I wish he would write more comics. The Black Canary story he wrote in *Secret Origins* #50 (third series, Aug 90) was fantastic, too."

Couldn't agree more about the multiverse or about Brennert, Brian. Here's one more thought, from **Randy Jackson of Chicago, Ill.**: "There is no question in my mind that Aparo is one of the great Batman artists — some would say *the* great Batman artist. As far as the stories go, I remember buying many of those comics as a kid and loving each and every one of them. Sure, they were goofy sometimes, but by and large they delivered a really good story.

"I'm very much looking forward to purchasing the Showcase edition of *The Brave and the Bold* and I'm hoping that several are done, just so I can read some Haney goodness. (Already enjoyed the goofy and occasionally riveting *Teen Titans* work that Haney was responsible for, and I am so down with that.)"

So say we all, Randy!

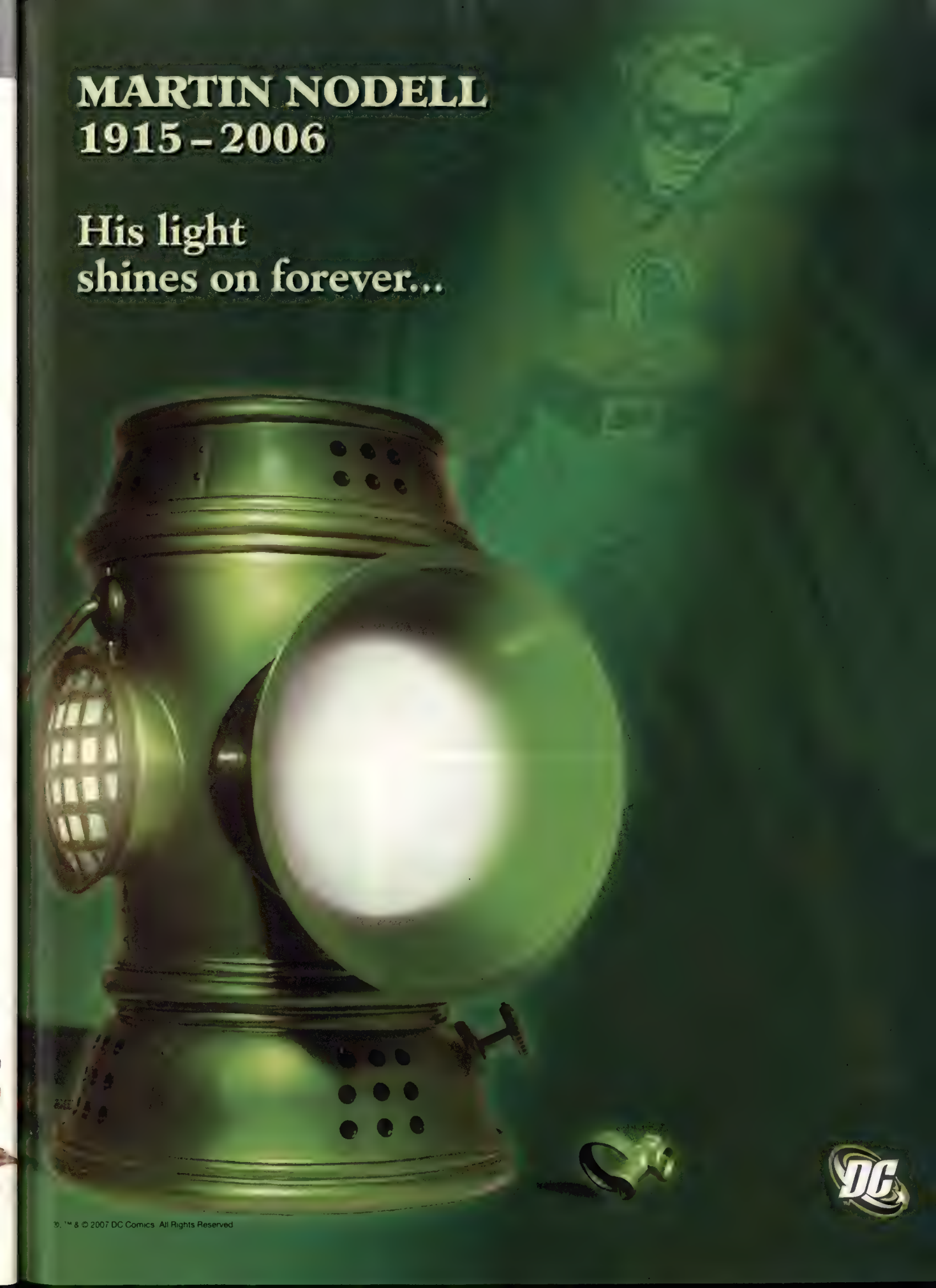
"The ones involving Earth-2 ... I think are the best argument in favor of the multiverse's continued existence."
— Brian



ANDREW SMITH, who has been writing professionally about comics since 1992, can be reached at *capncomics@aol.com* or on his message board, *www.captaincomics.us.*

MARTIN NODELL
1915 - 2006

His light shines on forever...



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10 EXTRA FAVORITE COMICS BOOK COVERS

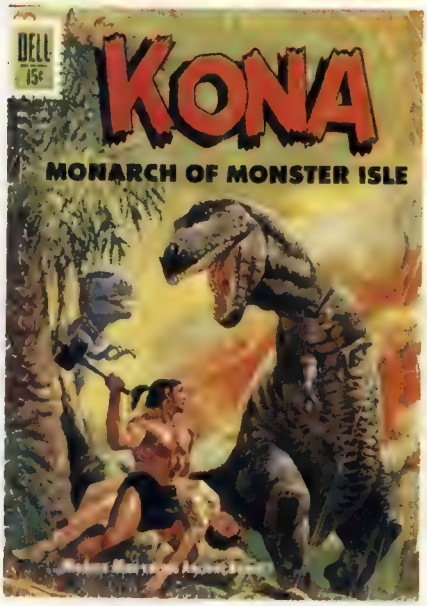
What the heck is going on here?

See Page 180 for the answer!

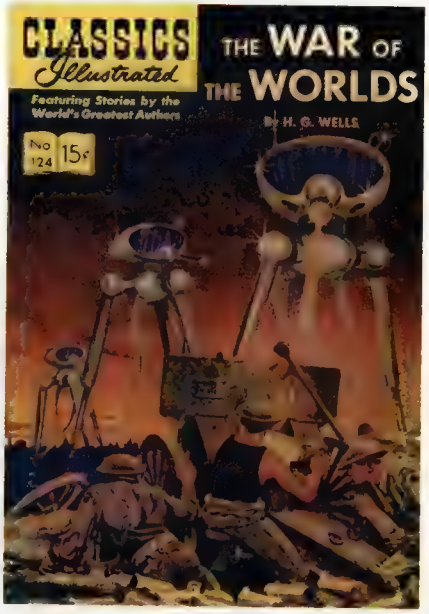
***Rip Hunter, Time Master* #4 (Oct 61). Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $95**

***Magnus, Robot Fighter* #13 (Feb 66). Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $18**

***Rawhide Kid* #25 (Dec 61). Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $90**



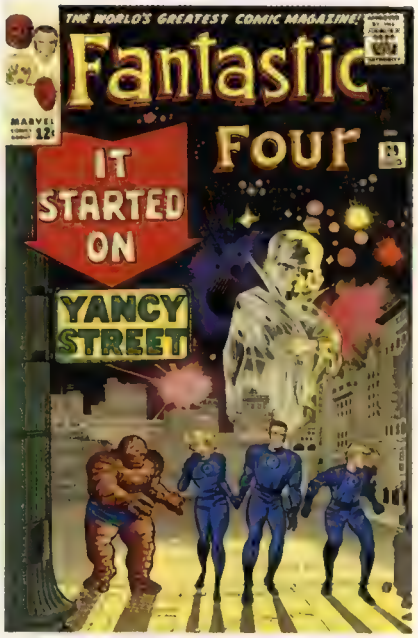
***Four-Color* #1256 (Apr 62). Orig. price: 15¢ Current NM price: $65**



***Classics Illustrated* #124 (Jan 55). Orig. price: 15¢ Current NM price (1st print): $45**

Rip Hunter, Time Master #24 © 1961 DC; *Rawhide Kid* #25 © 1961 Marvel; *Classics Illustrated* #124 © 1955 Gilberton; *Four-Color* #1256 © 1962 Dell; *Magnus, Robot Fighter* #13 © 1966 Western.

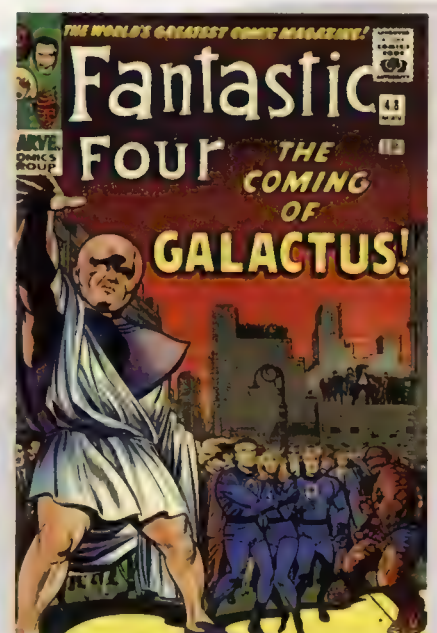
Tales to Astonish #25 (Nov 61). Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $200



Fantastic Four #29 (Aug 64). Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $260

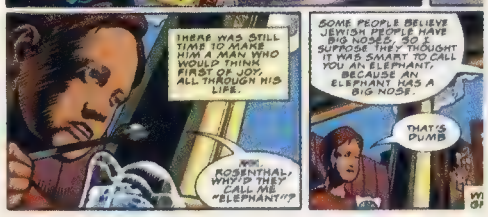
Tales of Suspense #71 (Nov 65). Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $42

Tales to Astonish #34 (Aug 62). Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $175



Fantastic Four #48 (Mar 66). Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $460

Fantastic Four #29 © 1964 Marvel; *Fantastic Four* #48 © 1966 Marvel; *Tales of Suspense* #71 © 1965 Marvel; *Tales to Astonish* #25 © 1961 Marvel; *Tales to Astonish* #34 © 1962 Marvel.



Harlan Ellison

It's Ellison Wonderland for sure!

by MAGGIE THOMPSON

Harlan Ellison's career began in the 1950s. In fact, by the time I met him in 1955, he was, at 21, a Big Name Fan in the science-fiction field, known for his classic fanzine, *Dimensions*. Since then, he has made a name for himself for his writing in many fields, raked in countless awards, and received an international reputation for simultaneous brilliance and assertiveness. To put it mildly.

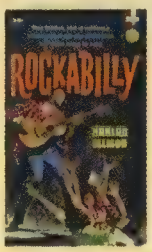
Dark Horse Editor Diana Schutz has known Harlan since 1984. "He just called me up then and introduced himself," she told me Dec. 18, the week after *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor* had gone to press. The book is the triumphant wrap-up to a project that began with a comic-book series in 1995. "Bob Schreck was the first editor on this project." she said, "Then, Anina Bennett took it on. I inherited it in 1996 and managed to get out *one* issue of what we laughingly called the quarterly, and then everything sat in the drawer for 10 years. Things happened, time passed, and Harlan had a heart attack."

But, when she suggested to Publisher Mike Richardson that she simply send the project back to Harlan, "Mike said we should do the project instead and he'd contact Harlan to do it. Mike did, Harlan did, and the book's gone to press now."

Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor, with cover art (right) by Brian Bolland, is on its way, scheduled to ship early in 2007.

Plus you get ...

In 1961, one of Gold Medal's mass-market paperback releases was *Rockabilly* by Harlan Ellison. Now, Dark Horse's M Press book-publishing arm has released the novel, known as *Spider Kiss* since its 1982 Ace paperback reprint. The rock novel isn't science fiction or fantasy — but it's vintage Ellison, the first novel he wrote after leaving the Army, and it's included in the collection of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



HARLAN ELLISON'S DREAM

Dream Corridor passages

New framing sequences created and written by Harlan Ellison
Illustrated by Eric Shanower.

"The Silver Corridor" adapted by Mark Wald, art Gene Ha [*Infinity*, Oct 56] colors Lovern Kindzierski; letters Sean Konot

"Opposites Attract" adapted by Tony Isabella, art Rags Morales [*Caper*, Nov 57, *DCQ* #1 Jul 96] colors Marie Severin; letters Clem Robins

"Djinn, No Chaser" adapted by Gerard Jones, art Jay Lynch [*Twilight Zone*, Apr 82] colors Bernie Mireault; letters Sean Konot

"One Life, Furnished in Early Poverty" adapted by Jan Strnad, art Paul Chadwick [*Orbit 8*, 1970, *DCQ* #1 Jul 96] colors Bernie Mireault with Dan Jackson; letters Bill Spicer

"Goodbye to All That" story by Harlan Ellison, art Kent Bash [*McSweeney's Mammoth Treasury of Thrilling Tales* #10, 02]

"The Voice in the Garden" art Bret Blevins [*Lighthouse*, Jun 67] [*DCQ* #1, Jul 96] colors David Nestelle; letters Michael Taylor

"The Discarded" adapted by Steve Niles, pencils Steve Rude, inks Eric Shanower [*Fantastic*, Apr 59] colors Marie Severin; letters William Schubert

"Gnomebody" adapted by John Ostrander, pencils Martin Nodell, inks Jed Hotchkiss [*Amazing Stories*, Oct 56, *DCQ* #1 Jul 96] colors Gregory Wright; letters Sean Konot

"Moonlighting" adapted by Diana Schutz and Harlan Ellison, art Gene Colan [adaptation of "Ormond Always Pays His Bills," *Pursued*, Jul 57] colors Dave Stewart; letters Tom Orzechowski

"Eyes of Dust" (fragment) adapted by Steve Niles, pencils Curt Swan [*Rogue*, Dec 59]

"Rock God" written by Harlan Ellison, art Neal Adams [*Coven 13*, Nov 69, this adaptation originated in *Creepy* #32, Apr 70, *DCQ* #1 Jul 96]

"Are You Listening?" adapted by Elliot S! Maggin, pencils Rafael Navarro, inks Eduardo Barreto [*Amazing Stories*, Dec 58] colors Dan Jackson; letters Sean Konot

"The Lingering Scent of Woodsmoke" written by Harlan Ellison, art by Therese Nielsen [original *DCQ* #1 Jul 96]

"The Man on the Juice Wagon" adapted by Jan Strnad, art Richard Corben [*Adam Bedside Reader* #14, 1963] colors Gregory Wright; letters Dave Cooper

Art © 2007 The Kilimanjaro Corporation

MAGGIE ELLISON WONDERLAND

It was a project in which micromanager Schutz worked with micromanager Ellison, so what went most smoothly in pulling this project together?

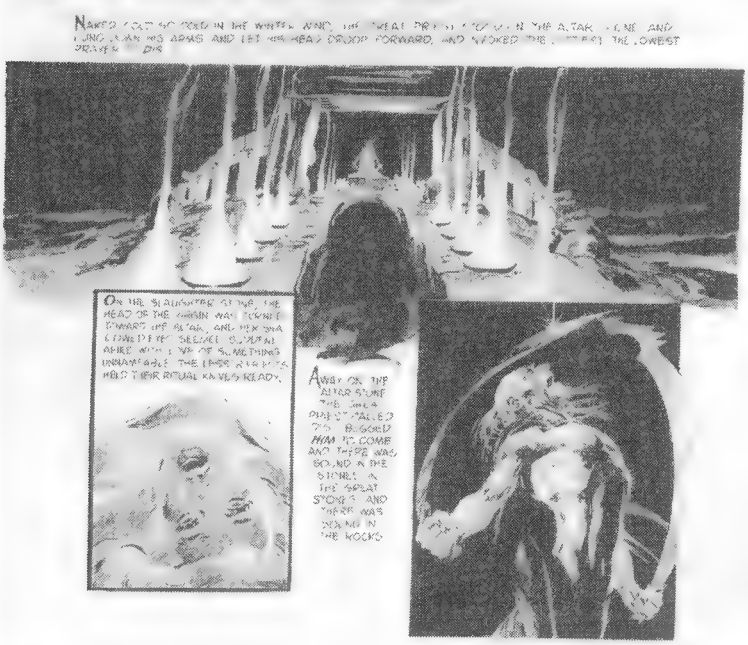
"Surely you jest," she replied. "Nothing. Absolutely *nothing* went smoothly, but nobody said it would be easy. By last Tuesday, we'd gone through these stories multiple times with corrections and rounds and rounds and rounds of proofs, and it was the day before the book was to go to the printer. It took me *all day* to proof it one final time. I *still* had corrections on every other page."

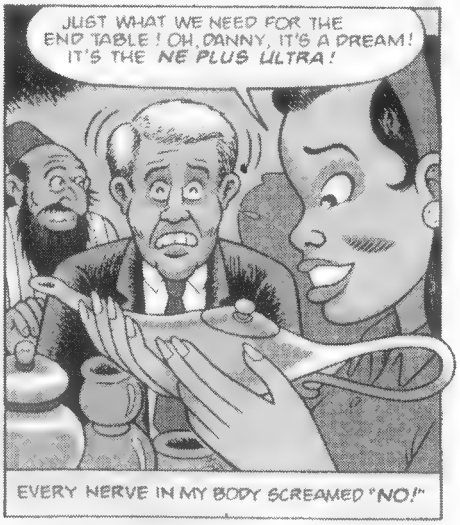
Following an Erik Nelson film shoot for a feature documentary on Harlan's life, Harlan told me the comics project's origin dated from about 1992, about three years before the first issue of the comic book. "I was approached by Showtime to do an anthology series with me. I said, 'You can either do *Dangerous Visions*, with payment to go to the authors in that anthology, or we could do a series called *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor* using my stories, and you wouldn't have to pay the original fees.' I explained the framing device and that I would introduce the stories, but they didn't seem to get it and eventually passed on it. But HBO contacted me, said they understood perfectly and it was great — but they wanted *me* to pay for storyboarding, so they could see it. So it sat.

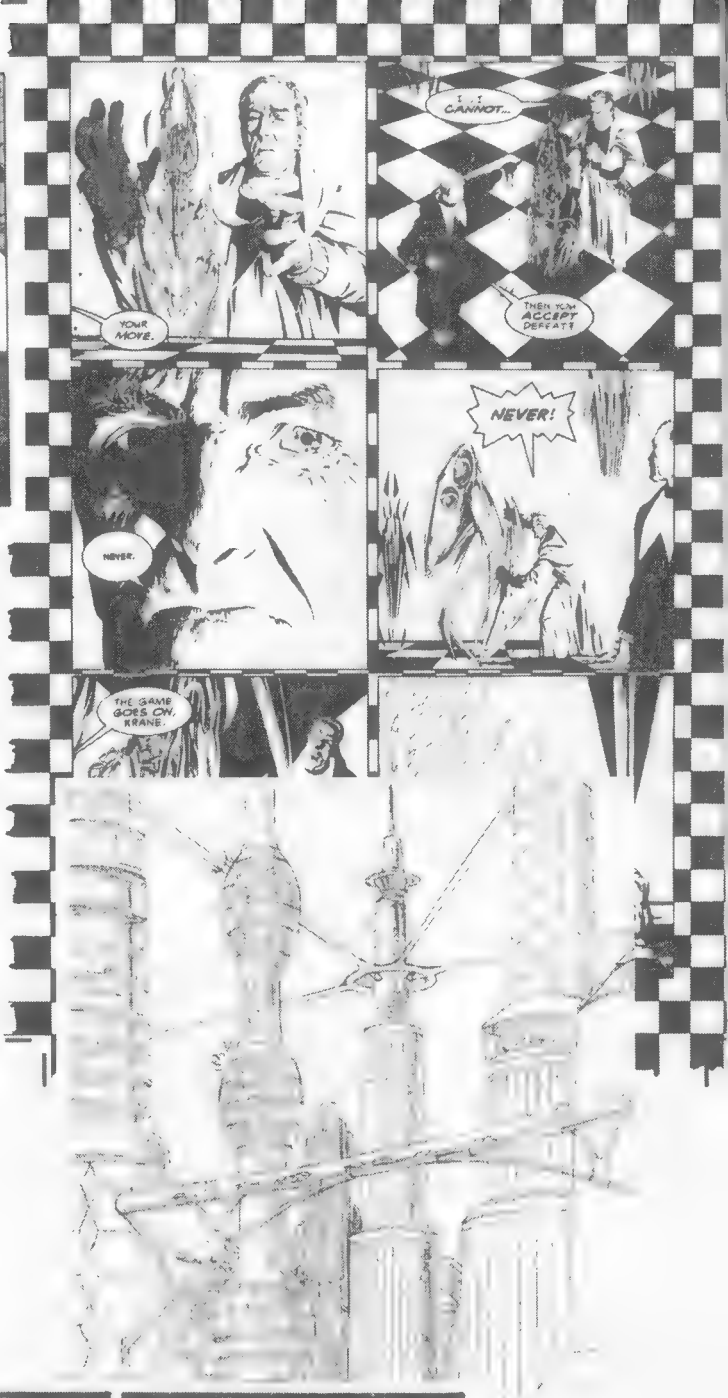
"I thought: How do I get storyboards for the TV series without bankrupting myself? That's when I had the epiphany. So I called Mike Richardson, and Mike loved it and put Schreck on it.

"It was my way of beating the system *and* making money from it."

The project is a treasure, delayed for a decade but here at last. The adapted material doesn't go back to his days with *Dimensions*, but some are from a time not much later than that; Harlan was a writing machine in the 1950s. (Note the "I'll Never Hitch-Hike Again!" article in a '50s digest handed to him to autograph at the 2006 World Science-Fiction Convention, left.)

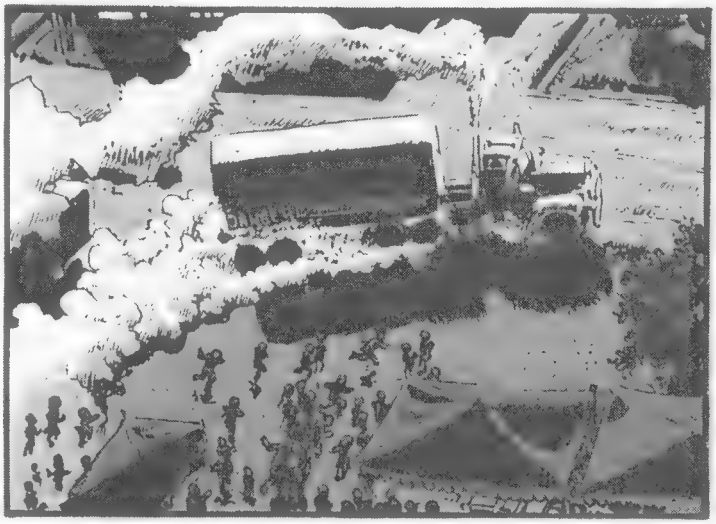






People who have never met him think they know him. People who have met him only now and then quickly grasp that they *don't* know him — and that's despite his candor on the widest variety of subjects.

Among the things they may not know: "I want to say again and again, I have loved comics since I learned to read before I was 2, and my parents had no objections. My love of comics has been an ongoing love affair of 72 years."



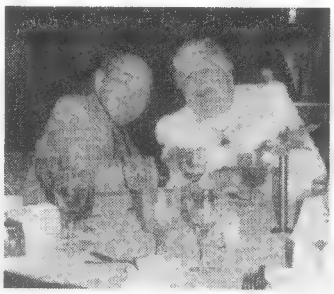
Mart Nodell

The creator lighted The Green Lantern in the Golden Age

Green Lantern creator Martin Nodell died Dec. 9 in a nursing home in Muskego, Wis., at age 91. Recently, the page that was his initial proposal for the character was discovered to have survived.

He lived to have his work acknowledged and celebrated by people who loved him. Marty and his wife, Carrie (pictured below on the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund Cruise), were mainstays of conventions around the country; she died in April 2004, but he continued his convention appearances until this spring, when failing health made such appearances too difficult. His last show was the Motor City Convention in May.

Nodell was born Nov. 15, 1915, the son of Morris and Elizabeth Nodell, and, after an education at the Chicago Art Institute, the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, and the Pratt Institute in New York, by age 20 he'd begun working as a commercial artist. He married Carrie Jan. 4, 1942.



In 1990, he provided ***CBG*** with the following timeline:

1935-1938 cartoon and caricature spots
1938-1940 freelance comic-book art for independent publishers
1940-1947 created Green Lantern for Gaines/DC Comics
1947-1948 limited animation, slide film for industrial firms
1948-1949 Timely Comics staff
1950-1956 art director for Cunningham & Walsh advertising agency in New York City
1956 freelance TV art director, producer to 1961 for the Leo Burnett Co. in Chicago
Advertising to 1967, art director
1968-1976 freelance advertising for Sears and shopping center special insert ads
1977-1984 West Palm Beach Post newspaper staff, advertising art for special sections
1984-1990 freelance advertising

Although his advertising work included projects for Folger's coffee, Texaco gasoline, Sunshine Biscuits, and the Pillsbury Company, he remained best known for his creation of the original Green Lantern: Alan Scott.

His awards included an Art Directors Award, an Ignatz Award, an Inkpot Award, and a Kansas City Convention Appreciation Award.

His son Spence called ***CBG*** the day his father died, saying Marty Nodell had had "a very good life." The funeral service was held Dec. 15 at Eternal Light Cemetery in Boynton Beach, Fla.

He was survived by sons Spencer and Mitchell Nodell, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. The family suggested that, in place of flowers, donations could be made in Martin Nodell's name to The Hero Initiative (formerly ACTOR, A Commitment To Our Roots), the fund to help comics professionals in need.

MEMORIES

Gary Colabuono
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

After Spence and I spoke today, a flood of memories came over me. The first was the phone call I received in September 1978:

"Hi, this is Martin Nodell. You may not be aware of this, you may not even care, but in 1939 I created Green Lantern." I'll never, ever, forget those words. How could I?

***At the 1985 Chicago Comicon, Nodell posed with the 100th* Everett True *strip, a jam piece that he participated in for* CBG.**

We all are so fortunate to have had Marty and Carrie in our lives the past 30 years. I last spoke to Marty a few weeks ago on his birthday.

He was in good spirits and eating birthday cake.

When Carrie passed away, he lost that twinkle in his eye. He was never the same guy.

My deepest sympathy to Spence and his family.

At Wizard World Chicago 2006, Gary Colabuono displayed Nodell's original proposal for Green Lantern.

UNDIMINISHED

Lee Houston Jr.
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

The Green Lantern's light may be a little diminished today, but Mart Nodell's contributions to our lives will forever shine.

ALWAYS A PLEASURE

John Lustig
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

Mart and Carrie were two of the nicest pros I know. It was always a pleasure to see them.

Carrie and I used to joke about us possibly being related, because somewhere in their extended family there was a Lustig. It would've been nice, if it was true.

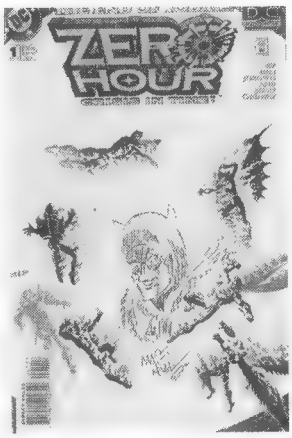
THE ONE TRUE GREEN LANTERN

Ed Riordan
819 Anchorage Lane
Palm Harbor, FL 34685

On Dec. 9, 2006, Mart Nodell, the creator of the Golden Age Green Lantern, passed away just shortly after his 91st birthday.

He was an overall great guy and a true friend. I got to meet him at MegaCon 1998 in Orlando, Fla., and we started a great friendship from there.

Every time we would have a show in Tampa, he was usually there.



He would always remember me because he and my dad had the same birthday.

He even came out to our comics shop (Wonder Water) in Tampa to do a signing. Not a lot of people came that day, but he told us great stories about the industry and people in it and we loved 'em.

He's done a few sketches for me (even the Batman head sketch shown here).

My heart goes out to his son, Spencer, and his family at this time, because truly a great man has been lost.

On the positive side (if there is one at this sad time), he and his wife Carrie (who passed away in 2004), will be together again lighting up the sky in emerald green.

You will be missed, Mr. Mart Nodell. Your light will shine forever.

A GIANT AMONG CREATORS

Conrad Stinnett

Mart Nodell was a giant among comics creators, as well as just a nice guy. Running into him and his family was always a highlight of my convention experiences. As a journalist, I had the opportunity to interview him a few times, and he always had interesting tales to tell.

You could always tell that Marty was as excited to see Green Lantern fans as they were to see him. My thoughts are with the Nodell family at this time.

ONGOING INFLUENCE

Michael Tierney
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

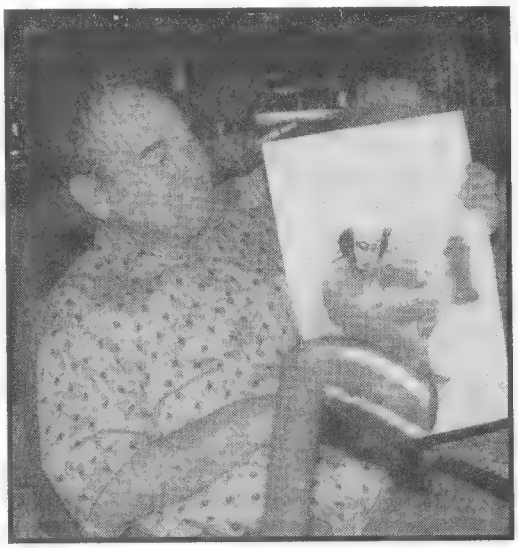
I met Mart and Carrie during a Comic Book Legal Defense Fund cruise. They were both extremely nice and very gracious people. They will be missed.

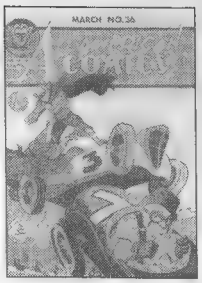
But Mart's influence on the comics industry will live on forever. We should all be so fortunate as to leave such indelible footprints in the sands of time.

NODELL FAMILY THANKS FANS

Jacque
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

I — Mart's granddaughter — just want to thank everyone for their thoughts and wonderful memories of Mart, on behalf of our entire family. He will truly be missed.





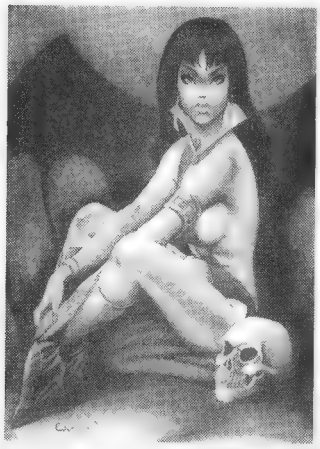
He will truly be missed.

Dave Cockrum

He gave a "New Look" to the redesigned X-Men — and more

Comic-book legend Dave Cockrum died Nov. 26, 2006, of complications from diabetes. He was 63.

Cockrum was born David Emmett Cockrum on Nov. 12, 1943, in Pendleton, Ore. During his youth, his family moved frequently, since his father was an Air Force lieutenant colonel. At the Cockrum website, *www.davecockrum.net*, he discussed the role comics had played in his youth. "I discovered comics at an early age, particularly the original *Captain Marvel* and *Blackhawk*. The Blackhawks were flying their F-90s at this time, and it was many years before I discovered they'd had earlier aircraft. To this day, the F-90 is one of my all-time favorite aircraft because the Blackhawks flew it."



He also discussed his artistic ability, which emerged when he was young and even then he knew he wanted to draw comics for a living. In college, he majored in art. Following a six-year tour in the U.S. Navy, he was hired by Warren Publishing, where he worked on *Vampirella* and other features.

Moving to DC, he worked on *Superman* and *Superboy*. That latter title featured a backup Legion of Super-Heroes story in many issues in the early 1970s. As he began handling the feature, more continuity began to be applied to the stories, and Cockrum's art supported the ongoing subplots and increased character development. This proved to be a defining move in his career, as fans paid increasing attention to his work on the team.

When he moved to Marvel Comics assignments, he helped writer Len Wein to redefine The X-Men. The team created such long-lasting characters as Storm, Colossus, and Nightcrawler, and it was Cockrum's designs for the characters that were especially eye-catching.

He worked for Marvel and DC through the '70s and '80s, working more than once on the X-Men titles and *Avengers* and as a cover artist for many other titles. In 1983, he created *The Futurians*; while it initially ran as an issue of Marvel Graphic Novel, it was later picked up by Lodestone and Eternity. Among more recent projects, he drew *Soulsearchers and Company* for Claypool.

In 2004, he became gravely ill with diabetes and pneumonia. This inspired a tribute book and auction to raise funds for his wife, Paty, and him. In recent years, Marvel agreed to pay him for his role in the success of the X-Men and related properties.

At *DaveCockrum.net*, the artist had written recently that he was "developing several new series ideas and arranging for *Futurians* material to be reprinted in Europe."

Recent tributes to him include the big-screen film *X-Men: The Last Stand*. Cockrum appears on the DVD's extras, and, in the movie, the U.S. president is named David Cockrum.

RECALLING KINDNESS

Howard Beck

I just heard about the death of Dave Cockrum yesterday. I would like to offer my condolences to his wife, Paty, and his family.

I met Dave several times when I had my stores. He made two appearances in Clifton and West Milford, N.J. He was one of the nicest people that I have met.

When he appeared in my West Milford store, he was scheduled to be there for three hours — but stayed for six, just so the kids that showed up would get free sketches and autographs. Even though his hand was stiffening from drawing for hours, he kept going.

He even would sign figures of X-Men characters that he didn't create.

He will be missed.

SUPER-GROUP REVAMPER

Nelson Jimenez
10 Leighton Rd.
Milford, CT 06460

I was so sad to read about the passing of Dave Cockrum. He was one of the true superstars of art, along with Jack Kirby, John Byrne, Stan Lee, George Pérez, *etc.* His clean, crisp style and sense of layout always made a comic book stand out. Who can forget how he revamped (with Cary Bates) The Legion of Super-Heroes in the pages of *Superboy*? Or how about *X-Men* with Len Wein and Chris Claremont? Both titles were pretty much dead in the market until Cockrum took over the art chores and gave all the characters great costumes — Lightning Lad, Colossus, Wolverine's mask, *etc.*

And the ladies he drew — va-va-*voom* — especially Storm and Saturn Girl. Even his short-lived series *The Futurians* was full of potential that never came to pass. And a lot of his designs live on in the cartoon series *Legion of Super Heroes.*

I had written a letter to ask DC to do a trade paperback of all the Cockrum-drawn Legion stories, but that never came to pass. I hope they consider it for 2007 as a way to honor the man. Marvel should also do the same for his Marvel creations. Mr. Cockrum, you will be missed.

I hope the Captain can devote a column to Dave's work besides Legion and X-Men. I believe he also drew a lot of backups in the pages of *Green Lantern, Blackhawk, etc.*

A list, please, of his various comic-book endeavors.

Maggie: *The list on this page is only partial and doesn't include such material as pin-ups, reprints, or covers.*

LEGACY

Paul Dale Roberts
5606 Moonlight Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758

I want to take time to remember a great man. That man is Dave Cockrum. It's funny you hear about people with diabetes and you never think too much about it. I was shocked to hear that Dave Cockrum died due to complications of his diabetes. This is so sad — and to think how many Americans have diabetes, an ailment that is something to take seriously.

Dave Cockrum was a great man, and it saddens me to see that he died so young. He truly overhauled the X-Men and made it the great team it is today, a team that everyone is aware of through his comic books and through the movies. The legacy of Dave Cockrum will live on forever, and the X-Men will be with us forever, thanks to Dave Cockrum.

Godspeed to a great man. You will not be forgotten.

Avengers *#106-108, #124-126*
Batman *#253, #410-412, #423*
Blackhawk *#254-255*
Captain America *#216*
Captain Marvel *#26, #54*
Creepy *#39, #40, #42*
Dark Dominion *#10*
Defenders *#50, #53, #57*
Eerie *#36, #39*
Elvira *#7, #28*
Futurians (Marvel Graphic Novel *#9, Lodestone #1-3)*
G.I. Joe Special Missions *#22, #24*
Giant-Size Avengers *#2-3*
Giant-Size X-Men *#1*
Green Lantern *#128*
Green Lantern Corps Quarterly *#3*
Howard the Duck *#16*
John Carter, Warlord of Mars *#1, #11*
Justice League Quarterly *#9, #11*
Legion *#25*
Legion of Monsters *#1*
Marvel Comics Presents *#1-8, #22-23, #32, #41, #73, #75-76*
Monsters Unleashed *#4*
Ms. Marvel *#20-21*
Nightcrawler *(Vol. 1) #1-4*
Power Pack *#60*
Rampaging Hulk *#2*
Ripley's Believe It or Not *#46*
Savage Land *#1*
Secret Origins *#42*
Sensational She-Hulk *#54*
Shadow State *#1-2*
Soulsearchers and Company *#15, #17-30, #32-35, #43-44*
Sovereign Seven *#19-23*
Star Trek *(2nd Series) #1-6, #8-9*
Superboy *#184, #188, #190-191, #193, #195, #197-202*
Superman *#248, #260, #264*
Teen Titans *#41*
Uncanny X-Men *#145-150, #153-158, #161-164*
Vampirella *#11*
Vampirella's Summer Nights *#1*
Vigilante *#44*
Wally Wood's T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents *#1-4*
Warriors of Plasm: Home for the Holidays *#1*
Weird War Tales *#99*
World's Finest Comics *#218*
X-Men *(1st series) #94-108, #110-111*

The Blurbs!

by **RAY SIDMAN**

Archie gives Betty, Veronica new look

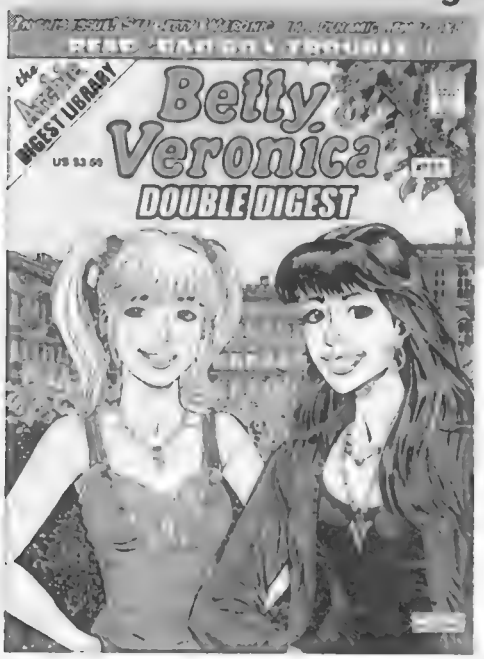


Image ©2007 Archie Comics

Archie Comics' favorite ladies Betty and Veronica are used to turning heads, and now the publisher has given readers another reason to do a triple-take: The pair, along with their pal, Archie, have a new — and *noticeably* different — look, starting with a story to run in *Betty & Veronica Double Digest* #151, on sale May 14.

The publisher described the new look, which also affects the other characters, as "a more realistic look." Art for that look will be provided by Steven Butler.

Archie also plans to present the two in longer, serialized stories.

Scholastic to sell Seven Seas manga

A pair of titles from Seven Seas Entertainment's manga line will be sold through Scholastic Book Fairs starting in January. The books will be offered in about 7,500 middle schools across the United States.

Both books are written by Nunzio DeFilippis and Christina Weir. The five-volume *Amazing Agent Luna* follows a 15-year-old girl who's a secret agent facing her hardest test: high school. *Destiny's Hand* tells the story of Olivia Soldana, a young pirate girl, in a three-volume series.

Car crash kills creator

A Dec. 2 car crash killed Whittaker, Mich., artist John Styrk Jr. The 32 year old Styrk was the creator of the self-published comic book series *Boomtown Scabs*.

Styrk was broadsided by an SUV that ran a stop sign in the early morning hours, according to a report in the *Ann Arbor News*. The newspaper said he had been returning from a comic book discussion group.

Rockwell painting eclipses record

A recently discovered painting by American art icon Norman Rockwell sold at auction for $15.4 million, easily eclipsing the previous record for a Rockwell painting. "Breaking Home Ties" went to an anonymous telephone bidder, reported auction house Sotheby's. Last May, Sotheby's set the then record for a Rockwell painting with "Homecoming Marine," which realized $9.2 million.

The original owner of "Breaking Home ties" had been *Henry* comic strip artist Donald Trachte Sr., who purchased the work from Rockwell. The painting was found in April by Trachte's son. It had been hidden behind a fake wall in his father's Vermont home.

Viper titles nominated to young adult list

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) has nominated a pair of books from Viper Comics for YALSA's newly created list of "Great Graphic Novels for Teens": *Emily Edison* and *The Muddle Man*. In January, YALSA is scheduled to announce all titles that made the list.

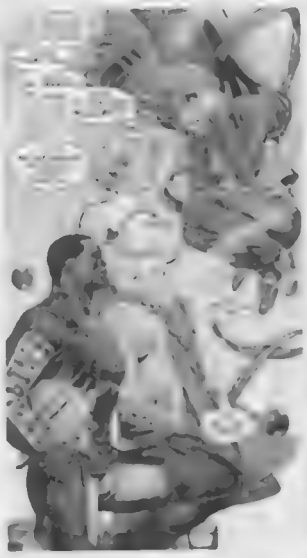
Emily Edison came out earlier in 2006, while the second four-issue series of *The Muddle Man* came out later in the year, following the success of the original series in 2005.

JSA's here, maybe with an old new character

By Maggie Thompson

With the first issue of their restart of DC's *JSA* series — this time, called *Justice Society of America* (technically, the third series with that title) — writer Geoff Johns and artist Dale Eaglesham talked with reporters Dec. 8.

Johns said, "I had a passion for the team," adding that he felt it was time to approach the story through what he'd learned in the interim since *JSA*. "The team feels different, the book feels different. It seems like an opportune time to get started. This is the one book I can see myself on for another hundred issues."



Images ©2007 DC Comics

In ***Comics Buyer's Guide***'s report in #1625 (page 12), Johns said that what sets this team apart from prior versions is, "This team is more aggressive, and by 'aggressive' I don't mean that they fight harder. It's more aggressive in terms of expanding the scope and taking the name 'Society' to heart. The motto is, 'The world needs better good guys,' and that's what The JSA is here for: They're all about trying to be a moral compass, and we're focusing more on character. It's going to be a lot more character driven."

Speaking of focusing on characters, among the members in the mix are Wildcat, Power Girl, Stargirl, Starman, Hourman, and a Liberty Belle — but she's a new Liberty Belle.

And there's one character that's outright new, with both creators speaking of Maxine Hunkel as one of their favorites. Eaglesham said, "I think everyone can relate to her in a way, because of her isolation. She is a really poignant figure." Johns said, "Agreed. She is very endearing to me, kind of a fangirl and someone who tries — tries a little too hard."

OK, Maxine Hunkel? And in ***CBG*** the team referred to a new member of the group, Cyclone. The roots of this series lie in the Golden Age, with the introduction of The Justice Society of America in *All Star Comics* #3 (Winter 40). It was in that issue that DC super heroes got together as a team, with members including Flash, Green Lantern, Hawkman, Atom, Sandman, Mr. Terrific, The Spectre, Doctor Fate, and Hourman. At about the same time, in *All American Comics* #20 (Nov. 40), Abigail Mathilda Hunkel — known as "Ma Hunkel" to her family and friends — donned (courtesy of creator Sheldon Mayer) long underwear, a cape, and a cooking pan on her head to become The (original) Red Tornado. She appeared in that original JSA tale but left without becoming a member; however, she was an honorary member of the super group, despite her lack of super-powers.

At her side in many adventures were two children, also in costume. One was Dinky, the younger brother of Mayer's character Scribbly. The other? Sisty, Ma Hunkel's daughter. Together, Dinky and Sisty were The Cyclone Kids.

While initial speculation led to the deductions about the ancestry of Maxine Hunkel, release of the issue revealed that she's Ma Hunkel's granddaughter. Moreover, there is a reference by Maxine to "Aunt Cisty," ruling her out as Maxine's mother. The question remains: How much of the zaniness of the Mayer take on super heroes will find its way into the evolved Justice Society of America?

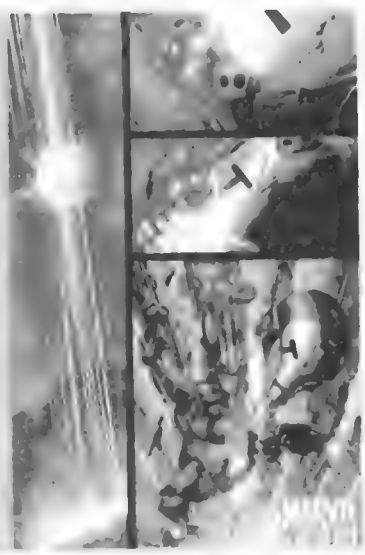
The final panel of the introductory issue is a flash forward to the upcoming year's continuity. Johns said, "I initially wanted it to end on a spread and we had an extra page to work with. Why don't we do a trailer to show the ideas of the first year? It's like the exclamation point of the book."

The first 24 issues have been planned already. "The first year more tightly and the second looser. The last page of #12, we'll probably do the same thing on the last page: a preview of the year to come."

New armor, new mini-series for Iron Man

Marvel has announced the latest Iron Man news, and Tony Stark — along with his new armor — will star in the mini-series *Iron Man: Hypervelocity*. The question answered by the series, said Marvel, is: Why did Stark build a new suit of armor?

Writer Adam Warren — who is also an artist and draws the cover of #1 — and artist Brian Denham are the creative team behind the six-issue series. The first issue is slated for release on Jan. 4 and has a "T+" rating. That designation from Marvel means it's aimed at readers age 9 and older. "Appropriate for most readers; parents are advised they may want to read before or with younger children."



Images ©2007 Marvel Characters Inc.

Michael Siglain on 52

by **RAY SIDMAN**

Image ©2007 DC Comics

CBG: *What's your involvement in* ***52****?*
Michael Siglain: I am the now not-so-new editor of *52*. Steve Wacker, the original editor of the series, left DC earlier this year, and I was fortunate enough to be given the reins to the series. Steve is a ridiculously talented guy and did an absolutely amazing job on *52*. I'm finishing the epic that he, Dan DiDio, and Paul Levitz started back when the "One Year Later" event was being discussed.

CBG: *Who's your favorite character in this series?*
Siglain: Wow, that's a tough one.
The fact of the matter is that my answer changes on an issue-to-issue basis. I was always a huge fan of The Question, so, whenever he's on the page, my eyes are drawn to him.

Of course, whenever we see Black Adam, I can't wait to see what he's going to do next. You never know if he's truly a changed man or if he's going to explode and rip another guy in half.

Then there's the mysterious Batwoman, the late, great Booster Gold — the list goes on and on.

CBG: *What's your favorite event in this series?*
Siglain: The introduction of Batwoman in Week 11 is pretty high on my list, as is Ralph confronting Jean Loring in Week 27. And, after seeing the next batch of scripts, I can honestly say that the best is yet to come. Keep your eyes out for Weeks 38, 44, and 48 — just to name a few.

"This is an epic that ranks right up there with all of the *Crisis* books." — Michael Siglain

CBG: *Considering epic DC events past and present, how pivotal is* ***52*** *to the history of the DC universe?*
Siglain: *52* isn't just pivotal to the DC universe; it's pivotal to DC as a company. In the DC universe, this is an epic that ranks right up there with all of the *Crisis* books: *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, *Identity Crisis*, and *Infinite Crisis*.

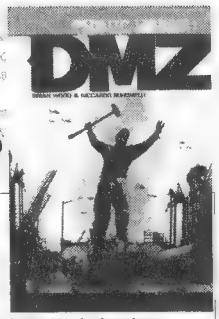
It not only fills in the blanks of the missing year between *Infinite Crisis* and *One Year Later*, but it introduces new characters and situations that will resonate throughout the DC universe for years to come. Looking at the bigger picture, *52* is also an enormous undertaking, brought about from none other than Paul Levitz himself.

It's being written by Geoff Johns, Grant Morrison, Greg Rucka, and Mark Waid — the four biggest writers in the industry — and it's being drawn by some truly amazing artists. Everyone involved in this series, from Keith Giffen with his brilliant breakdowns, to J.G. Jones and his gorgeous covers, to Alex Sinclair and David Baron with their wonderful colors — is giving it their all to make this series the best it can possibly be. Furthermore, they're creating comic-book history, and I'm proud to be a part of it.

CBG: *What do you hope readers get out of* ***52****?*
Siglain: I hope readers get a great, serialized story about characters that they really care about. I hope they get emotionally invested in these characters and their individual and connected stories. I hope they appreciate the truly beautiful covers and the amazing art that graces each and every page of this series. I also hope they enjoy the weekly aspect of it and the fun of being able to read the next chapter each and every week.

Databank

New comics sales for November 2006



Diamond sales
Top comics *ordered* by retailers

Comics shops ordered more than **7.96 million comic books** from **Diamond Comic Distributors** in November, up 1.5 million from the same month in 2005. Those comics were worth **$24.6 million**, up 27% from the same month in 2005.

Adding **all** comics, trade paperbacks, and magazines sold by Diamond, the total grows to **$39.25 million**, up 22% from the same month in 2005.

Orders shown below are **estimates:**

	Comic Book	Price	Publisher	Orders
1	Civil War #5	$2.99	Marvel	272,600
2	Justice League of America #3	$2.99	DC	140,900
3	New Avengers #25	$2.99	Marvel	136,500
4	Amazing Spider-Man #536	$2.99	Marvel	118,800
5	Astonishing X-Men #18	$2.99	Marvel	118,300
6	52#26	$2.50	DC	104,600
7	52#27	$2.50	DC	104,300
8	52#28	$2.50	DC	103,500
9	Punisher War Journal #1	$2.99	Marvel	102,700
10	52#29	$2.50	DC	102,700
11	52#30	$2.50	DC	102,600
12	Civil War Front Line #8	$2.99	Marvel	100,900
13	Wolverine #48	$2.99	Marvel	100,000
14	Batman #658	$2.99	DC	94,300
15	Wolverine Origins #8	$2.99	Marvel	91,600
16	Batman #659	$2.99	DC	90,600
17	Uncanny X-Men #480	$2.99	Marvel	88,600
18	Incredible Hulk #100	$3.99	Marvel	84,200
19	Superman Batman #30	$2.99	DC	84,000
20	X-Men #193	$2.99	Marvel	80,100
21	Captain America #24	$2.99	Marvel	79,900
22	Onslaught Reborn #1	$2.99	Marvel	79,100
23	Ultimate Spider-Man #102	$2.99	Marvel	77,100
24	Wonder Woman #3	$2.99	DC	77,000
25	Iron Man #13	$2.99	Marvel	76,800
26	Ultimate Power #2	$2.99	Marvel	74,700
27	Moon Knight #6	$2.99	Marvel	74,000
28	Green Lantern #14	$2.99	DC	72,900
29	CW YA & Runaways #4	$2.99	Marvel	71,800
30	Green Lantern #15	$2.99	DC	70,100
31	Ultimate X-Men #76	$2.99	Marvel	69,000
32	Action Comics #845	$2.99	DC	66,700
33	Eternals #5	$3.99	Marvel	66,400
34	Teen Titans #40	$2.99	DC	64,200
35	Supergirl #11	$2.99	DC	62,500
36	Superman #657	$2.99	DC	62,300
37	Teen Titans #41	$2.99	DC	61,700
38	Superman Confidential #1	$2.99	DC	60,200
39	Detective Comics #825	$2.99	DC	58,900
40	Ultimate Fantastic Four #36	$2.99	Marvel	57,800
41	Flash Fastest Man Alive #6	$2.99	DC	56,800
42	X-Men Phoenix Warsong #3	$2.99	Marvel	50,200
43	Sensational Spider-Man #32	$2.99	Marvel	50,200
44	Daredevil #91	$2.99	Marvel	49,300
45	Ghost Rider #5	$2.99	Marvel	47,900
46	Fantastic Four End #1	$2.99	Marvel	44,400
47	FN Spider-Man #14	$2.99	Marvel	43,500
48	X-Factor #13	$2.99	Marvel	42,800
49	Squadron Supreme #7	$2.99	Marvel	42,000
50	Black Panther #22	$2.99	Marvel	41,300

Source: *Diamond Comic Distributors, Comics & Games Retailer magazine*

The HEAT-meter
Top comics *sold* by retailers

Whereas the list on the left represents what comic books retailers **ordered and received**, the rankings below represent what retailers **said they sold**, in reports to ***CBG***. While not as exact as order data, this ranking shows those titles that are performing better in shops than their orders would indicate. **DC's *DMZ* #13** for example, came in 157th in orders for the month, but 35th in actual retailer sales.

Some titles listed below actually shipped the previous month but were still being reported as strong sellers.

1. Civil War
2. Justice League of America
3. 52
4. Astonishing X-Men
5. Batman
6. New Avengers
7. Amazing Spider-Man
8. Civil War: Front Line
9. Moon Knight
10. Uncanny X-Men
11. Wolverine
12. Wolverine: Origins
13. Punisher War Journal
14. Green Lantern
15. Iron Man
16. Superman/Batman
17. Action Comics
18. Teen Titans
19. CW: YA & Runaways
20. Wonder Woman
21. Ultimate Spider-Man
22. Eternals
23. Detective Comics
24. X-Men
25. Civil War: Choosing Sides
26. Captain America
27. Justice
28. Superman Confidential
29. Supergirl
30. Incredible Hulk
31. Superman
32. Ultimate X-Men
33. The Boys
34. Onslaught Reborn
35. DMZ
36. Ultimate Power
37. Fables
38. Ghost Rider
39. Midnighter
40. Seven Soldiers
41. Green Lantern Corps
42. Batman: LotDK
43. Immortal Iron Fist
44. Annihilation
45. Secret Six
46. Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter
47. Flash: The Fastest Man Alive
48. Nightwing
49. Ultimate Fantastic Four
50. Martian Manhunter

Source: *Comics & Games Retailer magazine*

The scoreboard
Publisher market shares

The first two tables below break down retailer orders for the Top 300 comics sold by Diamond, exclusive of trade paperbacks.

The table on the right represents the share of all publications Diamond sold, capturing comics not in the Top 300, trade paperbacks, and magazines (whether or not they contain comics).

Share of Top 300 Comics (in units)

Publisher	Share
Marvel	47.99%
DC	39.24%
Dark Horse	3.33%
Image	2.47%
Dynamic	1.57%
IDW	1.52%
Aspen	0.46%
Devil's Due	0.45%
Udon	0.38%
Bongo	0.33%

Share of Top 300 Comics (in dollars)

Publisher	Share
Marvel	48.38%
DC	37.86%
Dark Horse	3.23%
Image	2.51%
IDW	1.91%
Dynamic	1.61%
Devil's Due	0.58%
Gemstone	0.48%
Aspen	0.44%
Udon	0.41%

Share of ALL publications (in dollars)

Publisher	Share
Marvel	39.36%
DC	32.66%
Dark Horse	4.50%
Image	3.28%
Viz	2.59%
Tokyopop	2.32%
IDW	1.83%
Dynamic	1.39%
Wizard	1.17%
Gemstone	0.82%

Source: *Diamond Comic Distributors, Comics & Games Retailer magazine*

For more on industry sales trends, visit the **Knowledge Base** forum at

www.cbgxtra.com

COMICS IN YOUR FUTURE

Comics shipping information is taken from publisher and distributor solicitations and updates and is as accurate as possible at presstime. Items marked with a ✪ have been rescheduled from an earlier calendar.

ON SALE IN FEBRUARY 2007

A.D. Vision
Little Snow Fairy Sugar Manga Vol. 3 TP, $9.99

A-10 Comics
Damaged #3, $3.50

Aardvark-Vanaheim/Win-Mill Pro
Following Cerebus #11, $3.95

Abrams
Manga Shakespeare Hamlet GN, $9.95
Manga Shakespeare Romeo & Juliet GN, $9.95

Abstract Studios
Strangers In Paradise #88, $2.99

AC Comics
Femzine #4, $9.95
Men of Mystery #65, $9.95
Men of Mystery Cache of Classics Special #1, $21.95

Acc Studios
Liberality For All #4, $2.99

ALC Publishing
Works, $11.95
Yuri Monogatari Vol. 4 GN, $15.95

Alias
10th Muse Vol. 2 #16, $3.50
Legend of Isis #12, $3.50
Lost Raven GN, $9.99
Odyssey Presents Venus #1, $3.50
Orion The Hunter #4, $3.50

Alternative Comics
Numb, $3.95

Archie

The filming of a big-screen movie featuring Archie hero The Web is the focus of one of the stories in *Archie & Friends* #107.

Feb. 7
Archie Digest #232, $2.49
Betty & Veronica #224, $2.25
Jughead #179, $2.25
Sonic X #16, $2.25

Feb. 14
Betty & Veronica Double Digest #149, $3.69

Feb. 21
***Archie & Friends* #107, $2.25**
Betty & Veronica Spectacular #77, $2.25
Sonic The Hedgehog #172, $2.25
Tales From Riverdale Digest #18, $2.49

Feb. 28
Archie #573, $2.25
Archie Double Digest #177, $3.69
Veronica #178, $2.25

Anime Works Publications
Twin Signal Vol. 2 GN, $9.99

Antarctic Press
Dinowars Jurassic War of the Worlds #3, $3.50
Gold Digger #82, $2.99
Gold Digger Sourcebook Official Handbook To The Gold Digger Universe #3, $3.95
NHS Hawaii Pkt Manga Vol. 3 TP, $14.95
Ninja High School #147, $2.99
Pirates vs. Ninjas #2, $3.50

Ape Entertainment
Magnitude #3, $3.50
Nightmare World #2, $3.50

Arcana Studio
American Wasteland Blood and Diesel #1, $3.95
Kade Sun of Perdition #4, $3.95
Outlaw Scorn 3030 Ad #4, $2.99
Shadowflame #1, $3.95

Archaia Studios Press
Artesia Besieged #3, $3.95
Artesia Vol. 3 Artesia Afire HC, $24.95
Killer #3, $3.95
Okko Cycle of Water #2, $3.95
Secret History Book One, $5.95

Aspen
Shrugged #7, $2.99
Soulfire #10, $3.99

Avatar
Garth Ennis Chronicles of Wormwood #2, (two covers $3.99)
Jungle Fantasy Annual #1, (four covers $4.99, three spec. eds. $6)
Lady Death Shi #0, (three covers $2.99, spec. ed. $9.99, jewel ed. $39.99)
Medieval Lady Death War of the Winds #6, (three covers $3.99, spec. ed. $9.99)
Night of the Living Dead Just A Girl, (six covers $2.99, spec. ed. $7.99)
Pandora Annual #1, (three covers $4.99, three spec. eds. $6)
Threshold Mythic Sirens Pinups, (four covers $4.99, four spec. eds. $6)

Bandai Entertainment Inc
Tomb Raider Vol. 3 TP, $9.99

Barbour Publishing Inc
Hits & Misses Vol. 2 GN, $4.97

Basement Comics/Amryl Entertainment
Mike Hoffman Octavia Monster Sketchbook Sp Ed, $8.95
Monster University Cheerbook, $2.95
Scarlet Cascade Fearbook, $7.95

Big Bang Comics
Big Bang Comics Presents Protoplasman #4, $3.95

Blatant Comics
Hallo Cooking Evolved GN, $7.99 (spec. ed. $8.99, spec. ed. $9.99, spec. ed. $10.99, spec. ed. $19.99)

Bloodfire Studios
Utopiates #3, $2.95

Blue Line Art
Sketch Magazine #32, $5.95

Bongo Comics
Bart Simpson Comics #34, $2.99
Simpsons Comics #127, $2.99
Simpsons Comics Vol. 15 Beach Blanket Bongo TP, $14.95

Boom! Studios
Cover Girl #1, $3.99
Dominion #1, $3.99
Fall of Cthulhu #1, (two covers $3.99)
Mr Stuffins #2, $3.99
Warhammer 40K #3, (two covers $2.99)

Broccoli International USA
Disgaea Manga GN #2, $9.99
Kamui GN #6, $9.99

DARK HORSE COMICS

Bernie Wrightson returns to comics in February with ***City of Others* #1,** the first of a four-part mini-series featuring a serial killer who encounters two victims he can't kill.

Feb. 7
Alice In Sunderland Gn, $29.95
Chronicles of Conan Vol 11 Dance of the Skull Tp, $16.95
Conan & The Midnight God #2, $2.99
Eden Vol 6 It's An Endlsss World Tp, $12.95
Mighty Skullboy Army Vol 1 Tp, $9.95
Old Boy Vol 4 Tp, $12.95
Secret #1, $2.99

Feb. 14
Blade of the Immortal #122, $2.99
Gunsmith Cats Omnibus Vol 1 Tp, $16.95
Little Lulu Vol 14 Queen Lulu Tp, $9.95
Nexus Archives Vol 5 Hc, $49.95
Oh My Goddess Vol 5 Tp, $10.95
Playboy Interviews Mover and Shakers Sc, $22.95
Scarface: Point of No Return Novel, $6.99
Star Wars Legacy #9, $2.99
Star Wars: Rebellion Vol 1 My Brother My Enemy Tp, $14.95

Feb. 21
Conan #37, $2.99
Criminal Macabre Two Red Eyes #3, $2.99
Mail Vol 3 Tp, $10.95
Outer Orbit #3, $2.99
Rex Mundi #4, $2.99
Samurai Heaven & Earth Vol. 2 #4, $2.99

Feb. 28
***City of Others* #1, $2.99**
It Rhymes With Lust TPB, $14.95
Shaman Warrior Vol 2 Tp, $12.95
Star Wars Dark Times #5, $2.99
Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic #14, $2.99

Buenaventura Press
Hunter & Painter, $4.95

Castle Rain Entertainment
Jack The Lantern Ghosts #2, $1.95

C'Est Bon Kultur
Cest Bon Anthology Vol. 2 GN, $17.95
Piracy Is Liberation Vol. 1 Information Wants To Be Free GN, $13.95

Checker Book Publishing Group
Mutator #3, $1.95
Sojourn Vol. 5 A Sorcerer's Tale TP, $17.95

Cinebook
Lucky Luke in the Shadows of the Dericks TP, $9.99
Melusine Hocus Pocus TP, $9.99

Claypool
Deadbeats #82, $2.50
Elvira #166, $2.50

Dakuwaka Productions
Helios Under The Gun #3, $2.99
Purity #2, $2.99

Del Rey
Basilisk Vol. 4 GN, $13.95
Es Vol. 4 GN, $10.95
Love Roma Vol. 5 GN, $10.95
Mamotte Lollipop Vol. 1 GN, $10.95
Negima Vol. 13 GN, $10.95
Suzuka Vol. 3 GN, $13.95

Devil's Due
Eberron Eye of the Wolf Collectors Ed, $5.99
Forgotten Realms Streams Silver #1, $5.50 (spec. ed. $9.50)
Forgotten Realms Vol. 4 Crystal Shard HC, $29.99
G.I. Joe Americas Elite #20, $3.50
G.I. Joe Americas Elite Vol. 3 TP, $18.99
G.I. Joe vs. Transformers Vol. 4 #2, (two covers $5.50)
Killer 7 Vol. 1 TP, $18.99

Dial "C" For Comics
Return of the Super Pimps #1, $2.00

Digital Manga Distribution
Jazz Vol. 4 GN, $12.95
Man Who Doesn't Take Off His Clothes Vol. 2 Novel, $8.95
Moon & Sandals Vol. 1 GN, $12.95
Princess Princess Vol. 2 GN, $12.95
Wagamama Kitchen Vol. 1 GN, $12.95

DK Publishing
DK Graphic Readers Curse of Crocodile Gods SC, $3.99 (HC $14.99)
DK Graphic Readers Instruments of Death SC, $3.99 (HC $14.99)
DK Graphic Readers Price of Victory SC, $3.99 (HC $14.99)
DK Graphic Readers Terror Trail SC, $3.99 (HC $14.99)

Do Gooder Press
Ps238 #20, $2.99

Dr Master Publications Inc
Chinese Hero Vol. 1 Tales of the Blood Sword SC, $19.95
Iron Wok Jan GN #23, $9.95

Drawn & Quarterly
Aya HC, $19.95
One Eye SC, $14.95

Dutton Books
Dead High Yearbook, $18.99

Dynamite Entertainment
Adventures of Red Sonja Vol. 3 TP, $19.99
Battlestar Galactica #8, (four covers $2.99)
Battlestar Galactica Cylon Apocalypse #1, (four covers $3.50)
Battlestar Galactica Zarek #4, (two covers $3.50)
Darkman vs. Army of Darkness #4, (two covers $3.50)
Giant Sized Red Sonja #1, (two covers $4.99)
Highlander #5, (three covers $2.99)
Lone Ranger #6, $2.99
Lone Ranger Directors Cut #1, $4.99
Red Sonja #20, (four covers $2.99)
Red Sonja Vol. 2 Arrowsmiths TP, (two covers $14.99)
Witchblade Shades of Gray #1, (three covers $3.50)
Xena #7, (four covers $3.50)
Xena Vol. 1 Contest of Pantheons TP, (two covers $14.99)

El Macfearsome Comic Squares
Adventures of Dexter Breakfast #1, $2.75

Evil Twin Comics
Action Philosophers #8 Senseless Violence Spectacular, $2.95

Eyes On Hands On Entertainment
Soldiers of the Dead #1, $3.95

Fantagraphics
Blecky Yuckerella Vol. 2 Back In Bleck GN, $11.95
Castle Waiting Vol. II #5, $3.95
Charles Burns Library Vol. 2 Big Baby SC, $16.95
Charles Burns Library Vol. 3 Skin Deep HC, $24.95

DC

***The Brave and the Bold* #1**, shipping Feb. 21, has two different covers. Read more about the series beginning on Page

Feb. 7
52 #40, $2.50
All New Atom #8, $2.99
All Star Batman and Robin The Boy Wonder #5, (two covers $2.99)
American Way TPB, $19.99
Detective Comics #828, $2.99
DMZ Vol. 2: Body of A Journalist TPB, $12.99
Exterminators #14, $2.99
Helmet of Fate: Sargon The Sorcerer #1, $2.99
Jonah Hex #16, $2.99
Justice League Unlimited #30, $2.25
Justice Society Vol. 2 TPB, $14.99
Looney Tunes #147, $2.25
Mad Magazine #475, $3.99
Manhunter #28, $2.99
Midnighter #4, $2.99
Mystery In Space #6, $3.99
Nightmare On Elm Street #5, $2.99
Nightwing #129, $2.99
Omukae Desu Vol. 3, $9.99
Other Side #5, $2.99
Outsiders #45, $2.99
Scalped #2, $2.99
Shazam The Monster Society of Evil #1, $5.99
Supergirl #14, $2.99
Superman Chronicles Vol. 2 TPB, $14.99
Superman Confidential #4, $2.99
Swan Vol. 9, $9.99
Tranquility #3, $2.99
Y: The Last Man #54, $2.99
Ninja Scroll #6, $2.99
Teen Titans Go #40, $2.25

Feb. 14
100 Bullets #81, $2.99
52 #41, $2.50
All Star Superman #7, $2.99
Authority #2, (two covers $2.99)
Batman #663, $2.99
Batman Strikes #30, $2.25
Batman The Greatest Stories Ever Told Vol. 2 TPB, $19.99
Cartoon Network Action Pack #10, $2.25
DMZ #16, $2.99
Fables #58, $2.99
Friday The 13Th #3, $2.99
Gen 13 #5, $2.99
Green Arrow #71, $2.99
Green Lantern Corps #9, $2.99
JLA Classified #34, $2.99
Mad Classics #14, $4.99
Martian Manhunter #7, $2.99
Musashi #9 Vol. 10, $9.99
Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere TPB, $19.99
OMAC #8, $2.99
Sandman Mystery Theatre Sleep of Reason #3, $2.99
Showcase Presents Aquaman Vol. 1 TPB, $16.99
Stormwatch Phd #4, $2.99
Superman #661, $2.99
Superman Camelot Falls Hc, $19.99
Superman/Batman vs Aliens/Predators #2, $5.99
Tales of the Unexpected #5, $3.99
Teen Titans #44, $2.99
Teen Titans Titans Around The World TPB, $14.99
Tenjho Tenge Vol. 12, $9.99
Wonder Woman #5, $2.99

Feb. 21
52 #42, $2.50
Aquaman Sword of Atlantis #49, $2.99
Birds of Prey #103, $2.99
Birds of Prey Perfect Pitch TPB, $17.99
***Brave and the Bold* #1, (two covers $2.99)**
Catwoman #64, $2.99
Catwoman The Replacements TPB, $14.99
Checkmate #11, $2.99
Checkmate Vol. 1 A King's Game TPB, $14.99
Danger Girl Back In Black TPB, $12.99
Deadman #7, $2.99
Devil Does Exist Vol. 9, $9.99
Ex Machina Inside The Machine Vol. 1, $2.99
Flash The Fastest Man Alive #9, $2.99
Gals Vol. 9, $9.99
Hellblazer #229, $2.99
Helmet of Fate: Zauriel #1, $2.99
Ion #11, $2.99
Justice League of America #6, $3.50
Justice Society of America #3, $2.99
Justice Vol 2 Hc, $19.99
Krypto The Super Dog #6, $2.25
Omega Men #5, $2.99
Red Menace #4, $2.99
Robin #159, $2.99
Scooby Doo #117, $2.25
Shadowpact #10, $2.99
Spirit #3, $2.99
Testament #15, $2.99
Texas Chainsaw Massacre #4, $2.99

Feb. 28
52 #43, $2.50
Action Comics #847, $2.99
American Virgin #12, $2.99
Astro City The Dark Age Book Two #3, $2.99
Batman Confidential #3, $2.99
Blue Beetle #12, $2.99
Boys #8, $2.99
Cartoon Network Block Party #30, $2.25
Connor Hawke Dragons Blood #4, $2.99
Crossing Midnight #4, $2.99
Desolation Jones #9, $2.99
Empty Empire Vol. 3, $9.99
Firestorm The Nuclear Man #33, $2.99
Firestorm The Nuclear Man Reborn TPB, $14.99
Green Lantern #17, $2.99
Hawkgirl #61, $2.99
Jack of Fables #8, $2.99
Jack of Fables Vol. 1: Nearly Great Escape TPB, $14.99
JLA Classified #35, $2.99
JSA Classified #23, $2.99
Justice #10, $3.50
Kamandi Archives Vol 2 Hc, $49.99
Loveless #16, $2.99
Showcase Presents Green Lantern Vol. 2 TPB, $16.99
Supergirl and the Legion of Super Heroes #27, $2.99
Trials of Shazam #6, $2.99
Uncle Sam and the Freedom Fighters #8, $2.99
Wetworks #6, $2.99
Young Magician Vol. 7, $9.99

COMICS IN YOUR FUTURE

Comics Journal #281, $9.95
Head #17, $3.95
Milton Caniff Terry & The Pirates & Steve Canyon Meanwhile SC, $34.95
Mineshaft #19, $6.95
Misery Loves Comedy HC, $19.95
Raisin Pie #5, $3.50
Seeing Things SC, $16.95

Gemstone
E.C. Archives Weird Science Vol. 2 HC, $49.95
Uncle Scrooge #363, $7.50
Walt Disneys Comics & Stories #678, $7.50

Gestalt Publishing
Character Sketches 2007 Trauma & Joy SC, $7.95

Go Media Entertainment
Cantarella Vol. 6 GN, $10.99
Crossroad Vol. 6 GN, $10.99
Her Majesty's Dog Vol. 4 GN, $10.99
Tenshi Ja Nai (I'm No Angel) Vol. 6 GN, $10.99

Goodbum Studios
Hard Boiled Comics #3, $2.95

Graphix
Goosebumps Graphix Vol. 2 Terror Trips SC, $8.99 (HC $16.99)

Guardian Line
Code #2, $2.99
Genesis Five #2, $2.99
Joe & Max #2, $2.99
Seekers #1, $2.99

Hammock Entertainment
Estancia #5, $3.50

Heavy Metal Magazine
Borgia Vol. 2 Power and Incest HC, $14.95
Heavy Metal May 2007, $5.99

Heroic Publishing Inc
Flare #36, $2.99
Flare Adventures #19, (two covers $4.50)

Hexagon Comics
Kabur Vol. 1 TP, $20.95

Hyperion Books
Abadazad Book 3 Puppet Professor & The Prophet, $9.99

Icarus Publishing
A G Super Erotic Anthology #53, $4.99
A G Super Erotic Anthology #54, $4.99
Taboo District GN, $19.95

Ice Kunion
11th Cat Vol. 5 GN, $10.95
Heavenly Executioner Chiwoo Vol. 4 GN, $10.95
Legend Vol. 2 GN, $10.95
One Thousand and One Nights Vol. 4 GN, $10.95
Youre So Cool Vol. 1 GN, $10.95

IDW
24 Nightfall #4, $3.99
30 Days of Night Spreading The Disease #3, $3.99
Angel Auld Lang Syne #4, $3.99
Ashley Woods D Airain Aventure #2, $4.99
Clive Barkers Great & Secret Show #10, $3.99
Cobb Magazine, $9.99
Complete Underworld TP, $24.99
Desperadoes Buffalo Dreams #2, $3.99
Fallen Angel #13, $3.99
Fallen Angel Vol. 2 TP, $19.99
Maze Agency Vol. 2 TP, $24.99
Scarface Scarred For Life #3, $3.99
Star Trek Next Generation The Space Between #2, $3.99
Super Bad James Dynomite #5, $3.99
Swallow Book Three, $40.00
Transformers Escalation #4, $3.99
Transformers Generations #11, $3.99
Transformers Prime Directive Movie Prequel #1, (two covers $3.99)
Transformers Stormbringer Vol. 1 TP, $17.99
War of the Undead #2, $3.99
Wormwood Gentleman Corpse #6, $3.99
Zombies Eclipse of the Undead #4, $3.99

Illusive Arts Entertainment
Dorothy #8, $5.00
Tony Loco #2, $3.50

Image
Agency TP, $14.99
Blood Nation #1, $2.99
City of Heroes #18, $2.99
Darkness Level 3, (two covers $2.99)
Revved GN, $9.99
Watchdogs Vol. 1 GN, $11.99
Witchblade #106, (two covers $2.99)
Witchblade Manga #1, (three covers $2.99)

Imperium Comics
Pierce #4, $2.99

Infinity Studios
Chun Rhang Yhur Jhun Vol. 3 GN, $10.95
Unbalance Unbalance Vol. 2 GN, $10.95

JQ Enterprises
Goldie Lynx and A Whole Lotta Bears #1, $5.00

Kenzer & Company
Knights of the Dinner Table #124, $4.99
Kodt Bundle of Trouble Vol. 18 TP, $11.99

Kitty Press
Incubus Vol. 2 GN, $12.99
Thunderbolt Boys Excite Vol. 1 GN, $10.99

Last Gasp
Mitch O Connell Tattoos SC, $14.95
Pure Joy Comix #1, $4.95

Lerner Publishing Group
Graphic Universe Amaterasu Return of the Sun HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Atalanta Race Against Destiny HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Demeter & Persephone Spring Held Hostage HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Hercules Twelve Labors HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Isis & Osiris To Ends of Earth HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Jason Quest For Golden Fleece HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe King Arthur English Legend HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Robin Hood Outlaw of Sherwood Forest HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Thor & Loki In Land of Giants HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Trojan Horse Fall of Troy HC, $26.60
Graphic Universe Yu The Great Conquering The Flood HC, $26.60

Ludovico Technique
Red Line #3, $2.95

Maerkle Press
Love and Capes #3, $3.95
Raider Vol. 3 Dead Mens Tales GN, $10.95

Mahrwood Press
Balm In Gilead Vol. 1 GN, $19.95
Journeys The Collected Stories Vol. 1 GN, $16.95
King For A Moment Meyers Secret Vol. 1 GN, $16.95
Nagdila Vol. 2 Tale of the Al Hambra GN, $17.95

Markosia
Golly #3, $3.50
Mutation TP, $14.95
Of Bitter Souls TP, $16.95
Silent Ghost #4, (two covers $3.50)
Starship Troopers Damaged Justice #4, (three covers $3.50, spec. ed. $9.95)
Templar Chronicles The Heretic #1, $3.50 (spec. ed. $5.95)

Marshmallow Fun Company
Johnny Blasters M-Force #4, $1.99

Masterpiece Comics
Fireblast Adventures In The 30th Century #2, $2.95

Mirage Studios
Souls Winter Collected TMNT Work of Michael Zulli TP, $10.00
Tales of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles #32, $3.25

Moonstone
Infiniteens #4, $3.50
Kolchak Tales Frankenstein Agenda #2, $3.50
Phantom #15, $3.50

NBM
Boneyard #24, $2.95
Dungeon Parade Vol. 1 TP, $9.95
Sizzle #33, $5.95

Netcomics
Emperors Castle Vol. 3 GN, $9.99
In The Starlight Vol. 1 GN, $9.99
Land of Silver Rain Vol. 5 GN, $9.99
Let's Be Perverts Vol. 2 GN, $9.99
Pine Kiss Vol. 5 GN, $9.99

Novaris Entertainment
Roadkill Zoo #2, $2.50

Oni Press
Borrowed Time #2, $5.95
Damned #5, $3.50
Maintenance #2, $3.50
Wasteland #7, $2.99

Osprey Graphics
Tide Turns GN, $9.95
War Is On GN, $9.95

Papercutz
Totally Spies Vol. 4 Spies In Space GN, $7.95 (HC $12.95)

Penny Farthing Press
Stuart Moores Para TP, $19.95

Picturebox
1-800 Mice #1, $5.00
Cartoon Workshop Pig Tales GN, $14.95
Cold Heat #3, $5.00

Prima Publishing
Perfect Dark Janus Tears #6, $3.50

Pure Imagination Publishing
Alex Toth Edge of Genius Vol. 1 TP, $25.00

Radio Comix
Furrlough #169, $3.50
Genus #82, $3.50

Rebellion
2000 A.D. #1523, $4.10
2000 A.D. #1524, $4.10
2000 A.D. #1525, $4.10
2000 A.D. #1526, $4.10
2000 A.D. Extreme Ed #21, $5.99
Judge Dredd Complete Case Files Vol. 7 TP, $26.99
Judge Dredd Megazine #255, $7.50
Slaine Time Killer Sc GN, $24.99

Red Eye Press
Valentine #12, $3.50

Renaissance Press
Amelia Rules #17, $4.95

Rosen Publishing Group
Rosen Graphic Natural Disasters Avalanches & Landslides GN, $11.95
Rosen Graphic Natural Disasters Earthquakes GN, $11.95
Rosen Graphic Natural Disasters Hurricanes GN, $11.95
Rosen Graphic Natural Disasters Tornadoes & Superstorms GN, $11.95
Rosen Graphic Natural Disasters Tsunamis & Floods GN, $11.95
Rosen Graphic Natural Disasters Volcanoes GN, $11.95

Saf Comics
Two White Wizards GN, $15.95

image

Frank Einstein's earlier adventures from *Madman* to *Madman Adventures* to *Madman Comics* are collected in ***Madman Gargantua,*** an 852-page hardcover shipping Feb. 7.

Feb. 7
Black Mist #1, $3.99
***Madman Gargantua HC*, $125 (signed $150)**
Sam Noir Ronin Holiday #1, $2.99
Spawn Collection Vol. 2 HC, $49.95

Feb. 14
Death Jr Vol. 2 TP, $14.99
Emissary Vol. 1 Revelations TP, $14.99
Impaler #4, $2.99
Nat Turner Book 2 Revolution TP, $10.00
Nightly News #4, $2.99
Savage Dragon Vol. 11 Resurrection TP, $14.99

Feb. 21
Deadworld #8, $3.99
Elephantmen #7, (two covers $2.99)
Girls #22, $2.99
Strange Girl #16, $3.50
Strange Girl Vol. 3 TP, $15.99
Trakk Monster Hunter TP, $15.99
True Story Swear To God #5, $2.99

Feb. 28
Drain #4, $2.99
Godland #17, $2.99
Invincible #41, $2.99
Negative Burn #10, $5.99
Noble Causes #27, $3.50
Pirates of Coney Island #5, $2.99
PvP #32, $2.99
Spawn #166, $2.95
Spawn Armageddon Collection Part 2, $15.95
Strongarm #1, $2.99
Walking Dead Sorrowful Life Vol. 6, $12.99

MARVEL®

Stephen King's *Dark Tower* books come to comics with ***Dark Tower Gunslinger Born #1***, shipping Feb. 7.

FEB. 7

Astonishing X-Men #20, $2.99
Bullet Points #4, $2.99
Civil War Road To Civil War TP, $14.99
***Dark Tower Gunslinger Born* #1, $3.99**
Essential Ms. Marvel Vol. 1 TP, $16.99
Fantastic Four The End #5, $2.99
Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man #17, $2.99
Ghost Rider Team-Up TP, $15.99
Ghost Rider Trail of Tears #1, $2.99
Incredible Hulk #103, $2.99
Iron Man Execute Program TP, $14.99
Iron Man Hypervelocity #2, $2.99
Irredeemable Ant-Man #5, $2.99
Marvel Adventures Spider-Man #24, $2.99
Ms. Marvel #12, $2.99
New Avengers #27, $2.99
Newuniversal #3, $2.99
Red Prophet Tales of Alvin Maker #6, $2.99
Sensational Spider-Man #35, $2.99
Spider-Man and Power Pack #4, $2.99
Spider-Man Reign #3, $3.99
Squadron Supreme Hyperion vs. Nighthawk #2, $2.99
Ultimate Marvel Flip Magazine #22, $4.99
Ultimate Spider-Man #105, $2.99
Ultimate Tales Flip Magazine #22, $4.99
Uncanny X-Men #483, $2.99
White Tiger #4, $2.99
X-23 Target X #3, $2.99

FEB. 14

Amazing Spider-Girl #5, $2.99
Annihilation Book 1 HC, $29.99
Beyond HC, $19.99
Blade #6, $2.99
Civil War Poster Book, $5.99
Excalibur Classic Vol. 3 Crosstime Caper Book 1 TP, $24.99
Exiles #91, $2.99
Franklin Richards Lab Brat Digest TP, $7.99
Ghost Rider #8, $2.99
Immortal Iron Fist Directors Cut #1, $3.99
Magician Apprentice #6, $2.99
Marvel Adventures Fantastic Four #21, $2.99
Marvel Legacy 1990s Handbook, $4.99
Marvel Select Flip Magazine #22, $4.99
Marvel Tales Flip Magazine #21, $4.99
New Excalibur #16, $2.99
New X-Men #35, $2.99
Nextwave Agents of Hate Vol. 1 This Is What They Want TP, $14.99
Orson Scott Cards Wyrms #1, $2.99
Punisher Presents Barracuda Max #1, $3.99
Spider-Man Family #1, $4.99
Thunderbolts #111, $2.99
Thunderbolts Presents Zemo Born Better #1, $2.99
Ultimate Vision #3, $2.99
Ultimate X-Men #79, $2.99
Wolverine Origins #11, $2.99
Wonder Man #3, $2.99

FEB. 21

Anita Blake Vampire Hunter Guilty Pleasures #5, $2.99
Avengers Earths Mightiest Heroes II #7, $3.99
Cable Deadpool #37, $2.99
Civil War Front Line #11, $2.99
Civil War Initiative, $4.99
Criminal #5, $2.99
Doctor Strange Oath #5, $2.99
Hellstorm Son of Satan #5, $3.99
Legion of Monsters Werewolf By Night #1, $2.99
Marvel 1602 Gaimen HC, $24.99
Marvel Adventures Avengers #10, $2.99
Marvel Adventures Flip Magazine #22, $4.99
Marvel Heroes Flip Magazine #22, $4.99
Marvel Masterworks Daredevil Vol. 4 HC, (two covers $54.99)
Moon Knight #8, $2.99
Ms. Marvel Vol. 2 Civil War Premiere HC, $19.99
Onslaught Reborn #4, $2.99
Punisher War Journal #4, $2.99
She-Hulk 2 #16, $2.99
She-Hulk Vol. 4 Laws of Attraction TP, $19.99
Silent War #2, $2.99
Ultimate Fantastic Four #39, $2.99
X-Factor #16, $2.99
X-Factor Longest Night TP, $14.99
X-Factor Visionaries Peter David Vol. 2 TP, $15.99
X-Men First Class #6, $2.99

FEB. 28

Amazing Spider-Man #539, $2.99
Annihilation Heralds of Galactus, $3.99
Black Panther #25, $2.99
Captain America #25, $3.99
Civil War Battle Damage Report, $3.99
Daredevil #94, $2.99
Daredevil By Frank Miller & Klaus Janson Omnibus Vol. 1 HC, (two covers $99.99)
Essential Peter Parker Spectacular Spider-Man Vol. 3 TP, $16.99
Eternals #7, $3.99
Exiles Vol. 14 New Exiles TP, $14.99
Heroes For Hire #7, $2.99
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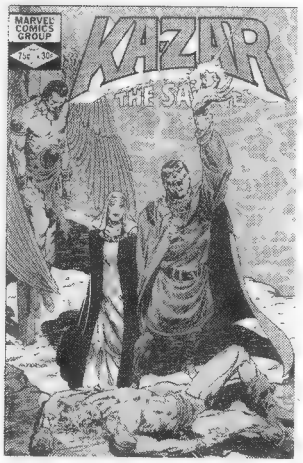
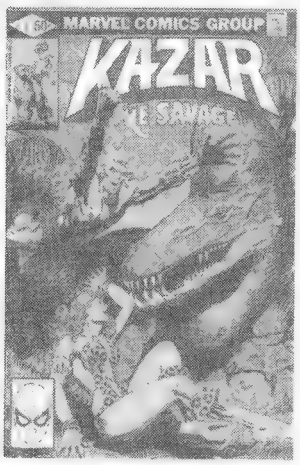
A time for secondary characters to thrive

Ka-Zar, the other King of the Jungle

by **BEAU SMITH**

The last explosion of diversity in mainstream comic books was in the 1980s.





In my never-humble opinion, the last explosion of diversity in mainstream comic books was in the 1980s. Marvel and DC were feeling the creative heat from such publishers as Eclipse Comics, Kitchen Sink Press, Comico, Pacific, and First Comics, just to name a few. For the first time, they were being challenged in the arena of super-hero style comics by such creations as *The Elementals, Scout, American Flagg!, The Badger, Miracleman*, and *Jon Sable*. These comics were being done by top talents, as well, where the stories equaled the art.

Having such creative competition caused both Marvel and DC to not only stay on their toes, but also to try things with established and secondary characters that they would've never tried before.

One of these books was *Ka-Zar the Savage.*

As you may or may not know, Ka-Zar was one of the very first characters that ever came out of the Martin Goodman stable of publishing back in the 1930s. Goodman was the head guy that brought readers Timely Comics, Manvis Publishing, Atlas Comics, and, of course, Marvel Comics.

Ka-Zar started out in the pulp magazines in 1936 as yet another version of the popular Tarzan character that Edgar Rice Burroughs introduced in *All-Story Magazine* in 1912. Being blond was the main difference in Ka-Zar, who then swung into the comic-book world in *Marvel Comics* #1 (Nov 39) as part of the assemblage of features in that anthology title.

Nevertheless, the Ka-Zar introduced in the Silver Age is the one most readers are familiar with. Lord Kevin Plunder was the son of an English nobleman. The story was that his parents discovered "The Savage Land," where they were killed and Kevin was raised by a sabretooth tiger. (Weren't we all?) As humorous as that sounds, it's not as nutty as being sent in a rocket from Krypton, being frozen in ice for 40 years, or being raised by apes. So save the snickering. This is comics.

Ka-Zar has been presented in lots of forms.

Sometimes he speaks like the early Hulk, other times broken English, and (luckily for us all) as of late he talks with perfect English. Ka-Zar has made more guest appearances in Marvel comics than most A-List characters. He's entertained loads of guests of his own in The Savage Land, as well. Seems as if he's always the perfect guest and the perfect host — unless you're a bad guy or his crazy brother.

In the 1980s, Marvel made an innovative creative and marketing move when it took *Ka-Zar the Savage* and made the series available through subscription and the direct market only. This allowed the publisher to skip the Comics Code and give the stories a more mature attitude and storylines. By "mature," I don't mean the cheap, shock style that we have to endure now, in which well-established characters spew out cuss words and the writer calls it "mature." Nope, not in *Ka-Zar*.

Writer Bruce Jones opened up mature, adult stories that folks 30 and older could enjoy just as much as anyone from 17 on up. Ka-Zar and his love interest (and later wife), Shanna, had a truly adult relationship with wonderful dialogue and situations in which they didn't act like the cardboard cutouts that had come before.

The Ka-Zar the Savage era — written by Jones with art by Brent Anderson, Ron Frenz, and Armando Gil — were and still are some of the best comics to be published in the last 35 years. So many critics always speak of Frank Miller's run on *Daredevil* or Alan Moore's *Watchmen*, but I believe that the run of *Ka-Zar the Savage* should stand right up there with them. The series was a near-perfect blend of action, romance, drama, and surprises. It was the path of progression that Tarzan never took.

The dialogue in the series was witty without being cute. Today's admirers of Joss Whedon's work would find *Ka-Zar the Savage* a treat. Though he disagrees with me, I think the art

on *Ka-Zar* is some of Ron Frenz' best work. I believe he found a perfect partner with the inks of Armando Gil. The Brent Anderson issues were as amazing as he is today. He added a wonderful touch of realistic body movements and mannerisms that made the characters come to life. Every base was covered, no matter if the story took place in the city or the jungles of The Savage Land. Everything was dead-on. Ka-Zar never looked more manly and Shanna never looked as sexy. (OK, Frank Cho's version is just as good. No doubt about that.)

During this series, one of the best under-used Marvel villains was created: Belasco. He is better known for being the guy who later kidnapped Colossus' sister and turned her into Magick. Belasco was a multi-layered villain who had a creepy, sinister way about him.

Ka-Zar the Savage also had a nice arc in which Spider-Man/Peter Parker was the guest. It is still one of the very best guest shots that Spider-Man has ever made. Jones showed great insight to Peter Parker that readers

The dialogue in the series was witty without being cute. Today's admirers of Joss Whedon's work would find Ka-Zar the Savage a treat.

If you're interested in checking out this series for yourself or want to revisit the series, then you're in luck.

hadn't seen since the Stan Lee, Steve Ditko, and John Romita days. There was a wonderful love-interest triangle that Jones presented with Peter, Shanna, and Ka-Zar: one that showed true human jealousy the way real humans feel when threatened by a new person on the scene. The mixture of soap opera and action was done with a master's touch. It was like a date movie, an action movie, and, at times, an epic like *The Lord of the Rings* all rolled into a perfect ball.

If Hollywood had been as interested in comics in the 1980s as it is today, this series would've been snatched up. It had all the elements of the Spider-Man movies placed in a much more exotic setting. And when the stories did take place in New York, you felt the harshness and reality of the concrete jungle as well as you did that of the lush Savage Land.

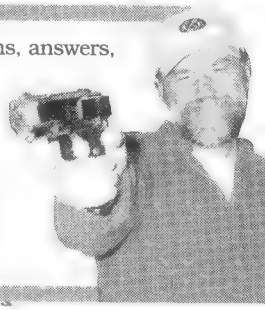
In #21 (Dec 82), where Spider-Man appears, the main villain is Kraven the Hunter, and the battle with him will leave any reader dizzy as they use the cityscape as a trampoline of battle.

Here's the best news. If you're interested in checking out this series for yourself or want to revisit the series, then you're in luck. Back issues for the 34-issue series *Ka-Zar the Savage* only run on the average a buck each in most comics stores. In some cases, you may be able to find them in the vanishing *"Four for $1"* boxes. Even in Mint condition, you're looking at around $2 each.

Like you, I wish Marvel would reprint these great issues in its *Essential* format. That would be the best way to discover these hidden gems. Maybe it will someday. Until then, I'll keep my collection of them handy.

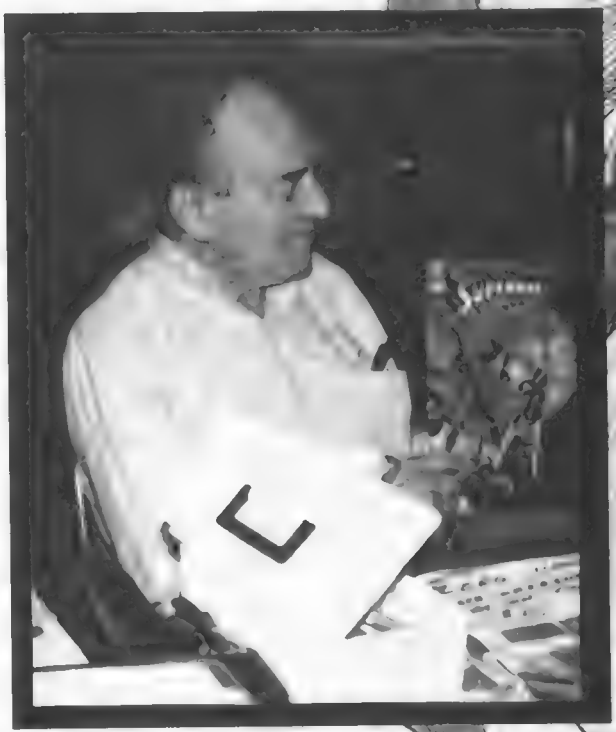
As always, I'd love to hear your thoughts on the series — or the column in general. You know where to find me. I'm not that hard to find. Like Ka-Zar ... keep swingin'.

BEAU SMITH invites questions, answers, thoughts or wonderful items of worth to The Flying Fist Ranch, P.O. Box 706, Ceredo, WV 25507. E-mail Beau at *beau@flyingfistranch.com* or visit his website: *www.flyingfistranch.com*



Column © 2006 Beau Smith

We mourn the loss of a comics pioneer ...



Martin Nodell

1915-2006

SAN DIEGO COMIC CON INTERNATIONAL

Green Lantern © 2006 DC Comics

Remembering a pair of legends while ...

Moving forward at Mid-Ohio-Con

by **TONY ISABELLA**

As I was packing for Mid-Ohio-Con, it hit me that I wouldn't be going there, if it weren't for Jerry.

But, if you have a moment, if your heart is big enough to spare a moment, give a nod and a smile for all the good ones who spent their lives making great art and small art and even entertainment. When they're gone, there's only one way to tell them you miss them ... Send them a moment of kind thought right now. The beam will pick it up and carry it across the stars to them where they wait. I've been sending good wishes to the ones I miss all evening. Now it's your turn.

— Harlan Ellison, *Harlan Ellison's Dream Corridor* #5

Mid-Ohio-Con 2006 was one of the best conventions I have ever attended — this despite my being the show's program director and not getting to spend nearly enough time with my friends, the fans, and the wonderful guests. Sadly, this event was book-ended by terrible loss. On Thanksgiving, just two days before the show, Jerry Bails, the father of comics fandom, passed at the too-young age of 73. On Sunday, as the show was winding down, we learned that comics artist and fan Dave Cockrum had died at the even-more-too-young age of 63.

Dave Cockrum was a regular at Mid-Ohio-Con.
(Photo by David Phelps)

Both were dear to me and countless other comics fans.

Jerry was at the forefront of just about every important event in the early days of comics fandom: fanzines, newszines, adzines, the first comics apa (amateur press association), fan awards, *etc.* What he didn't originate, he would participate in with enthusiasm, knowledge, and an unfailing generosity. As I was packing for Mid-Ohio-Con, it hit me that I wouldn't be going there, if it weren't for Jerry. I wouldn't be communicating with fans in person or via postal mail or online, if it weren't for Jerry.

He had a profound effect on the comics industry. I don't know if I would have pursued a career in comics without having been part of comics fandom as a teenager, and there are many professionals who came from the same beginnings.

My correspondence with Jerry was sporadic, but he was always ready to answer my questions and share his vast knowledge of comics and comics creators. In the past year, it has been my great joy to have been a member of some of the same online groups as Jerry. In them, I learned he was as brilliant and generous and progressive and thoughtful about the issues of the real world outside comics as he was about issues of the comics he loved. I was learning from him right to the end of his life and I suspect I'll continue to learn from him to the end of mine.

Dave Cockrum was more or less a contemporary. From the moment I saw his drawings in the fanzines to which we both contributed in the late 1960s, I knew he'd make it to the "big leagues." Everyone knew it. He was that good from the get-go.

Dave was an extraordinary artist but he was an enthusiastic fan, as well, and, to those of us lucky enough to have known him, a great friend. He was a guest at Mid-Ohio-Con a few years back, and every fan who met him, every member of our con crew who worked with him, loved him madly. If you couldn't love Dave, your brain just wasn't made right. When we lose

someone like him, we lose, not just an amazing talent, but a damned fine human being.

I'm a comic-book guy, maybe a mite on the simple side. I like to think there's something pretty spiffy beyond this world of ours, someplace where we can joyously continue the passions of our lives.

I imagine Jerry having access to all the comics creators he never got to meet and all the information that eluded him in this world. I imagine Dave creating all the great comics he never got to create in this world. It's a small comfort compared to the loss, but it's a comfort, nonetheless.

Jerry, Dave, thanks for all you shared with us.

It is an enormous conflict of interest for me to "review" Mid-Ohio-Con in these pages. Feel free to savage me for this shocking breach of ethics when I run for president next year. The American people deserve to know the truth.

Promoter Roger Price always puts on a great show. This year — the first held in Battelle Hall at the Columbus Convention Center — was no exception. The guest list was incredible, the size of the hall allowed fans welcome elbow-room when chatting with the guests or shopping with the exhibitors, and the — ahem — panel programming showcased a variety of talents and topics.

Matthew "Feedback" Atherton made his first comics convention appearance since appearing on Stan Lee's *Who Wants to Be a Superhero?* Sci-Fi Channel competition last summer. He was everything anyone could want from a guest: enthusiastic, friendly, and great with the kids who flocked to see him. With artist Matt Haley, who drew the art for the TV series, he was host of our "Superhero Trivia Challenge."

And he's definitely one of us. Comic books, action figures, *etc.*

The Joker asks where Feedback gets his wonderful toys.

The fans and contemporary comics creators got to hang out with a quartet of legends: Dick Ayers, Al Feldstein, Gary Friedrich, and Herb Trimpe. Gary and Herb were first-time visitors to the show; both were amazed by how many fans came to their tables to express admiration for their work and get comics signed by them. This was Gary's first convention in decades, and I never got tired of seeing him grinning with delight. He's hoping to attend more conventions this year and make a return visit to Mid-Ohio-Con.

Small-press and self-published comics creators were a big part of the show, as they always are. There were also celebrities from "TV Land," including Marcia Wallace, Joyce DeWitt, Mira Furlan, and Corin Nemec. I don't know how many comics, media, and other guests were at the show, but my guess would be more than 150.

Retailers? Man, were there great comics and great buys to be found at Mid-Ohio-Con this year! I was shopping for a good friend in England and I still can't believe the rare comic book I scored for him. I never thought I'd even see a *copy* of that one.

Would that I had the space to give you a happy-moment-by-happy-moment report on Mid-Ohio-Con, but I've already blown any pretense of impartiality by writing this much about it. If I dared rate it as I do the other items I write about in this column, I might well exhaust the magazine's supply of "Tonys." So let's just leave it at this: I had a terrific time this year and I expect to have an even more terrific time next year.

And this three-word hint for next year's program:

Maggie. Thompson. Roast.

Dave was an extraordinary artist but he was an enthusiastic fan, as well, and, to those of us lucky enough to have known him, a great friend.

Actor Comics Presents Vol. 1

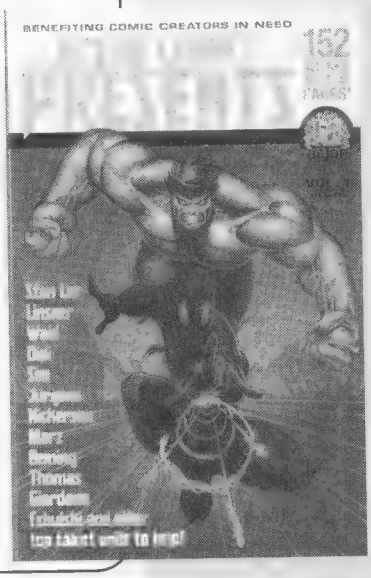
By various artists

The Hero Initiative, the first federally chartered not-for-profit corporation dedicated strictly to helping comic-book creators in need, was at Mid-Ohio-Con. From its representatives, I bought a copy of ***Actor Comics Presents* Vol. 1** ($10). It's a 152-page collection of stories by a bevy of fantastic talents, including Stan Lee, Paul Dini, Joseph Michael Linsner, and Dave Sim. Courtesy of Marvel Comics, two of the dozen or more tales feature Spider-Man and The Incredible Hulk.

There's quite a bit of variety in this anthology and too many great stories for me to name them. But I have to at least mention "The Day the Superheroes Quit" by the surprising pairing of Lee and Linsner; "My Hero," a Spider-Man story by Ron Marz and Dan Jurgens; Roy Thomas and Dick Giordano's adaptation of Robert E. Howard's "For the Love of Barbara Allen"; and Mark Waid's scary "My Hand to God: True Tales of Horror From the Convention Trail."

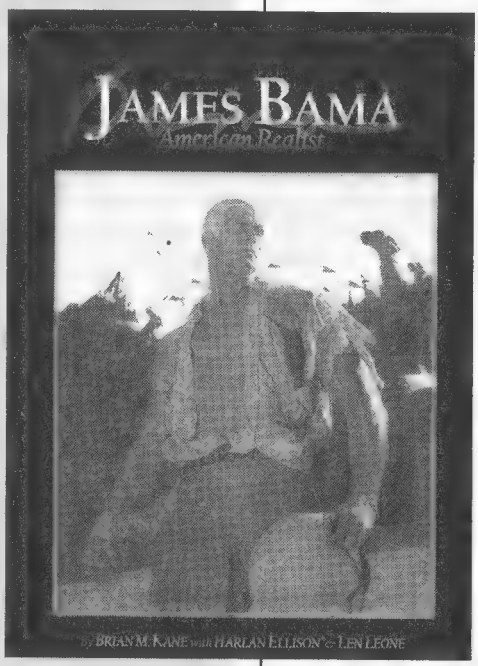
Actor Comics Presents offers good bang for your bucks and supports a wonderful cause. It earns five Tonys.

www.heroinitiative.org

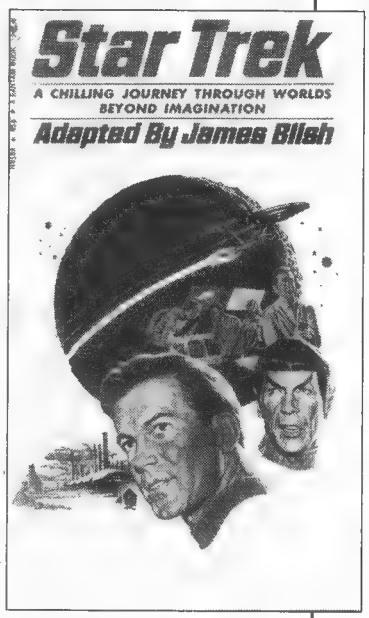


James Bama: American Realist

By Brian M. Kane



One of the gems I got at Mid-Ohio-Con was ***James Bama: American Realist*** by Brian M. Kane (Flesk Publications, $34.95) with intro by Harlan Ellison and foreword by Len Leone, the art director and vice president of Bantam Books for more than 30 years. This hardcover study of the career and works of the great artist is downright, literally mesmerizing. It took all the will power for which I am legendary to take my eyes off Bama's paintings — of which hundreds have been included in this tome — to read the illuminating text or even turn the page to look at the next amazing canvases.



Bantam's Doc Savage paperbacks were my introduction to Bama, but, had I more money and time than was allotted to me as a high-school student, I probably would have bought every book with a Bama cover. Even now, looking at the covers displayed lovingly on page after page, I want to leap from my desk and go to every used bookshop in the state of Ohio. Bama painted hundreds of paperback covers; surely not *all* the copies of those books can be in the hands of his fans. There must be some left for me, right?

Kane, who teaches at the Columbus College of Art and Design, does a first-rate job leading readers through Bama's achievements without losing us non-academic types. Ellison expresses the sheer wonder of Bama's artistry, while Leone reveals the professionalism that went hand-in-hand with Bama's genius. Quotes from artists and writers, liberally sprinkled throughout the volume, make clear the reverence with which Bama and his work are held. But the paintings are the heart and soul of this book. They are powerful, emotional images with a sense of reality so strong that you think you could reach out and feel the heat of the Arizona plains. Or the fires of brutal combat. Or the softness of the Bama women. Or, if you were so inclined, the rippling muscles that lay beneath that eternally ripped shirt of Doc Savage.

James Bama: American Realist is lovingly and wonderfully made. It earns the full five Tonys.

www.fleskpublications.com

Christmas Eve, the First Lady of Yuletide Cheer

By George Broderick Jr.

Christmas will be several weeks past by the time this review appears, but I'm betting George Broderick Jr.'s ***Christmas Eve, the First Lady of Yuletide Cheer*** (Cool Yule Productions, $5.95) retains its charm throughout the year. This is Broderick's first full-color, creator-owned comic and it tells the tale of how three Christmas fairies created a new heroine for the holidays and of Eve's battle with the diabolical Black Peter. It's a great-looking comic book, all 52 pages of it, and it earns four Tonys.

www.georgebroderick.com

Hero Tomorrow

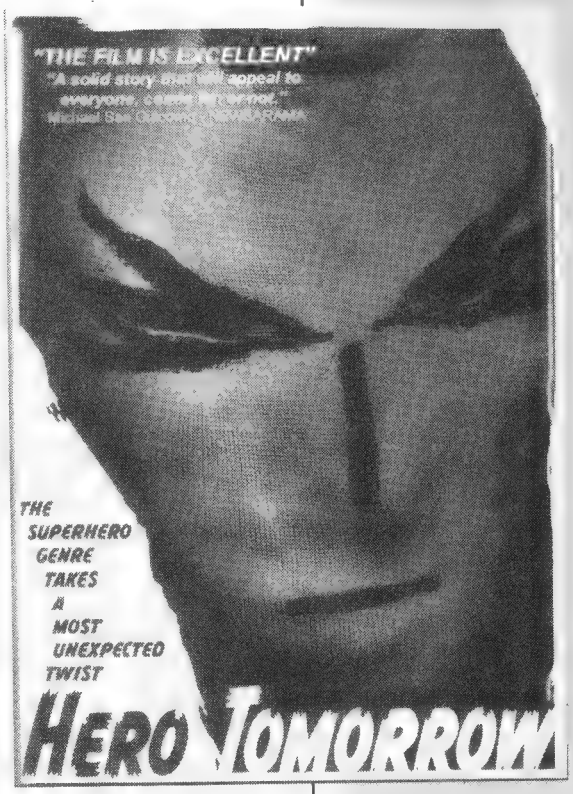
By Ted Sikora

One of the highlights of Mid-Ohio-Con was an evening screening of ***Hero Tomorrow*** by co-writer/director Ted Sikora. This indy film belies its low budget as it tells its engaging tale of a comic-book creator getting too close to his creation and the spiraling impact this has on his life and the lives of those around him. I've seen the movie a couple times now and I'm always impressed by how good it looks. The story is solid; the comics-related stuff rings true; the acting is never less than good and often superb. The direction and cinematography hold the film together well. The surprises — character and plot revelations — are truly surprising but they never come out of nowhere.

Perren Henderson's portrayal of the struggling comics creator David is excellent, revealing the character's passion and problems. David's creation, Apama, is actually a pretty good super-hero; I could see an ongoing *Apama* comic. With a hero inspired by Native American culture, such a series could have a nice "urban animal" feel to it. I'd be interesting in reading it.

Jocelyn Wrzosek is the cast's stand-out performer. As Robyn, David's girlfriend, she pushes darn near every emotional button you can imagine. She's got what it takes to be a genuine comics fandom heartthrob. Other exceptional performances include Shelley Delaney as Robyn's mom and Ray McNiece as the owner of the Hero Tomorrow comic-book shop. In fact, my favorite scene in the movie, running during the end credits, is a hilarious vignette between McNiece and a sharp-talking Texan with rare comic books to sell.

Note should also be made of the many comics creators who made their characters and comics available to Sikora and co-writer/co-producer Milo Miller. Comics fans will delight in the mentions of *Kurt Busiek's Astro City, The Frankenstein Mobster, Hip Flask, El Mucho Grande*, and others. Full disclosure demands I mention that I get a "thanks" in the end credits, though all I did was let some comics people know Ted and Milo needed help and have the good sense to turn down Ted's offer to cast me in the movie.



Hero Tomorrow is not currently available on DVD, but you can get a taste of the movie at *www.herotomorrow.com.*

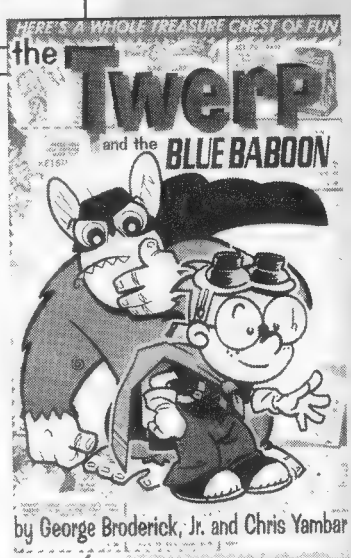
Me, I'm hoping some movie distributor catches this review and signs up Sikora and Miller. Their film is definitely worthy of a wider audience. On our usual scale of zero to five, *Hero Tomorrow* earns an impressive four Tonys.

The Twerp and the Blue Baboon

By George Broderick Jr. and Chris Yambar

The Twerp and the Blue Baboon (Comic Library International, $8.95) by George Broderick Jr. and Chris Yambar came out earlier this year, but I didn't see it until Mid-Ohio-Con. It's 64 pages of suitable-for-all-ages delight wherein the smallest kid in school proves to be the biggest hero in the galaxy using villain-fighting equipment he bought from ads in comic books. Then, there's The Blue Baboon, who is kinda like Peter Parker except he has a pink, fleshy behind. Yambar writes, Broderick draws, and you'll be laughing out loud at the Baboonesque homage to the origin of Spider-Man. It's a great comic book and, thus, earns four Tonys.

www.yambar.com



Love and Capes #2

By Thom Zahler

Also Christmas-themed and also good-the-whole-year-round is my pal Thom Zahler's ***Love and Capes #2*** (Maerkle Press, $3.95). Mark (The Crusader) and Abby are celebrating their first Christmas as a couple, but Mark doesn't have clue one what kind of present to give Abby. On her end, Abby knows that, with all Mark's super-powers, he could get her any present she asked for and doesn't want to take advantage of that. Mark's solution to the gift conundrum is heart-warming. He may be the best boyfriend in comics.

I continue to be in awe of Zahler's work on this title. He gives great sitcom without being the least bit crude. His drawings and the pastel coloring combine to create as inviting a look for a comic book as I've seen in years. This is a mainstream-outside-of-comics sensation waiting to happen. Get in on the fun now so that, later, you can say you were there at the beginning.

Love and Capes #2 earns the full five Tonys.

www.loveandcapes.com

Jetta

By Dan DeCarlo

Jetta (Airwave, $9.99) is a must-have collection for fans of the great Dan DeCarlo. Jetta is a typical teenager ... from the 22nd century ... who appeared in a short-lived comic published by Standard circa 1953. The six DeCarlo-drawn stories reprinted in this trade paperback aren't as witty as their Archie Comics counterparts but they're still great fun, as is the new Jetta story written by Chris Yambar and drawn by Richard Maurizio. Add historical text pages, the original covers, and pin-ups by Batton Lash, Tania Del Rio, and others, and you get a sweet package that easily earns a respectable three out of five Tonys.

www.airwavepublishing.com

TONY ISABELLA, comics writer and author, has been appearing in ***CBG*** since #3 in 1971. Review items can be sent to P.O. Box 1502, Medina, OH 44258. Check out his website at *www.wfcomics.com/tony*, or e-mail him at *tony@wfcomics.com*!

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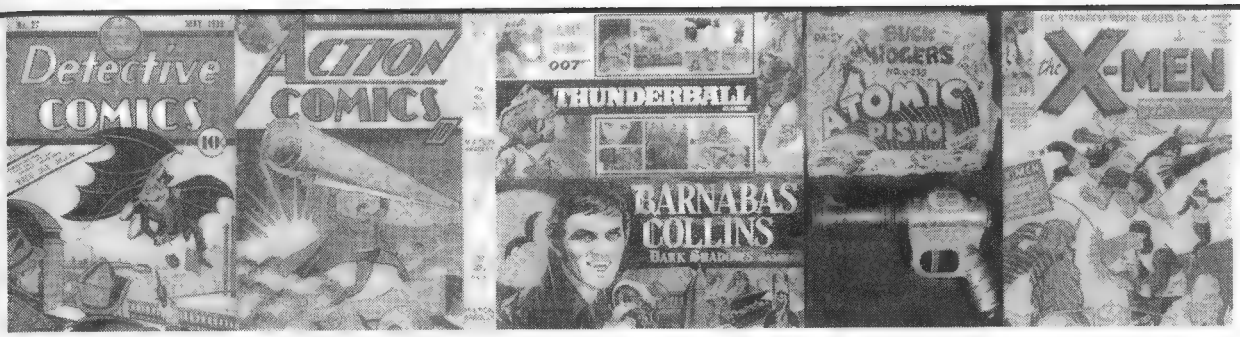

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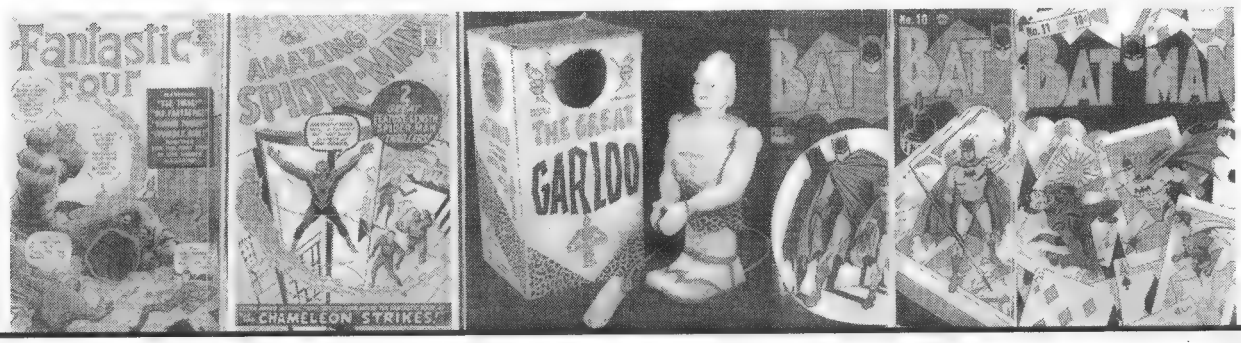


COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE REVIEWS

PICK OF THE MONTH COMIC BOOK

Batman/The Spirit
DC

$4.99, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writer: Jeph Loeb; Artist: Darwyn Cooke
reviewed by **Karen O'Brien** ★★★★

In a delightful one-shot celebrating the past and present, Jeph Loeb and Darwyn Cooke introduce The Spirit to the DC universe with a bang — and a batarang. Under Loeb's deft direction, Batman and The Spirit have the kinetic chemistry of Bing Crosby and Bob Hope. Batman, not yet such a Dark Knight, is the consummate detective, while The Spirit is alive in the moment and flying adroitly by the seat of his pants.

The tale begins with Commissioners Gordon and Dolan recalling the adventure of the initial meeting of Batman and The Spirit. Gordon and Dolan attend a policeman's convention in Hawaii, unaware that the rogues' gallery of villains from Gotham City and Central City are holding their own gathering at the same hotel. Tracking the bad guys, our heroes meet with a fight and cleverly save the day.

Cooke's amazing art recalls the early 1950s with irresistible modern touches. He also includes Will Eisner's trademark of placing The Spirit's name in the background of a gorgeous splash page — and gives Batman the same treatment.

Don't miss it!

www.dccomics.com

Shadowhawk One-Shot #1
Image
$1.99, color, 20 pgs., available now
Writer: Jim Valentino; Artists: Valentino, Chance Wolf
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★

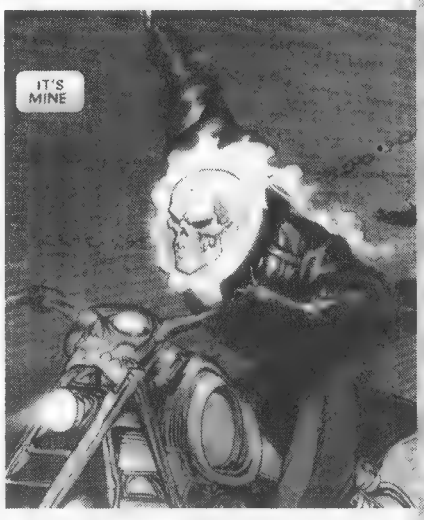
This is apparently intended as a jumping-on point for latecomers, since it offers little for regulars and its packaging is uncommon (which is not to say that it's bad). It's a buck cheaper than most other comics, and, though its page count is smaller, the absence of ads keeps the story-page count high — perhaps even higher relative to the price than that of a normal comic.

The story is unremarkable. Teenage Shadowhawk's father wants him to retire because of the danger. In his civilian identity, Shadowhawk flirts with cheerleaders. Then, Shadowhawk confronts a super-villain. It's pretty standard super-hero stuff, essentially Spider-Man with Hawkman's origin. But that's what the current incarnation of Shadowhawk is: Spider-Man with Hawkman's origin.

The reader is beaten over the head with the Spider-Man riff. Not only is the story titled "Great Responsibility"; the whole quote about "great power," *etc.* is quoted in its entirety. Will new readers, especially Spider-Man movie viewers, take this as a hat tip and homage or as plagiarism?

www.imagecomics.com

Ghost Rider #5
Marvel
$2.99, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writer: Daniel Way; Artist: Javier Saltares
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★



The new *Ghost Rider* series isn't the deepest, most thought-provoking title on the market, but it does offer readers some hellacious art, with breakdowns by Javier Saltares, finishes by Mark Texeira, and lots of shades of orange, red, and brown by colorist Dan Brown. Fans of early issues of the popular 1990s *Ghost Rider* series will enjoy the look of this book, thanks to the returning art team (minus colorist Gregory Wright) and to the titular character, who is Johnny Blaze in name but wields the chain of Danny Ketch (the '90s Ghost Rider) and wears his spiked jacket. With writer Daniel Way's generic characterizations and dialogue thus far, it doesn't matter who is behind the flaming skull.

Issue #5 finds Ghost Rider battling Lucifer and his minions, but the main focus is on the origin of The Spirit of Vengeance. Blaze made a deal with the devil to rid his adoptive father of cancer, only to watch said relative crash and burn in a motorcycle stunt accident, paving the way for much guilt and vengeance.

www.marvel.com

Green Arrow #68
DC
$2.99, color, 40 pgs., available now
Writer: Judd Winick; Artist: Scott McDaniel
reviewed by **Shaun Manning** ★★★

In Part Three of "The Away Game," filling in the story of Oliver Queen's missing year, Green Arrow nears the completion of his training at the hands of the world's deadliest assassins. But, as a final test, he'll have to face an army of expertly trained killers — and he'll have to do it alone. Sure, we already know the heroes prevails, but at what cost?

While roughly three-quarters of this issue is taken up by the climactic fight scene, the most interesting bit comes in Ollie's departure from the island. Green Arrow ends his own self-imposed exile by discussing his political ambitions with his son, and this leads to an unexpected and poignant insight into the relationships between Ollie, Connor, and Mia. It's a brief but beautiful scene — and a skillful observation on writer Judd Winick's part. Not everyone enjoys Winick's "real-life" social scenarios, but he's proven himself an expert at portraying the finer points of human interaction.

www.dccomics.com

Fantastic Four: The End #1-2
Marvel
$2.99@, color, 48 pgs.@, available now
Writer and Artist: Alan Davis
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★★½

Fantastic Four: The End is set in an alternate future in which Reed Richards has expanded his influence to create a post-war, worldwide utopia that is virtually crime-free. Unlike most tales of this type, Earth really is a utopia, not a dystopia, yet the story remains exciting. Johnny Storm has joined The Avengers, Ben Grimm is married and living on Mars, and Sue Storm, recovering from the death of her children, is studying underwater archeology. Despite peace on Earth, there is still a need for super-heroes, who find purpose in battling anarchists at the edge of the galaxy.

This is action and adventure on an epic scale, tempered by engaging interpersonal moments between heroes who are recognizable in appearance and in deed, yet altered in interesting ways. The plot allows for numerous guest stars (such as Iron Man, whose organic self died long ago) and even some newer, younger heroes who resent the lack of conflict. The story is complemented beautifully by the gorgeous art, which is rich with color, detail, depth, and dynamic flair.

www.marvel.com

Seven Soldiers #1
DC
$3.99, color, 52 pgs., available now
Writer: Grant Morrison; Artist: J.H. Williams III
reviewed by **Shaun Manning** ★★★½

We were told a soldier would die, but it is shocking to see just what a thrashing the good guys get in the long-delayed final chapter of *Seven Soldiers*. Spanning from the beginning of human history to its final horrific evolution, Grant Morrison and J.H. Williams III wrap up their opus with shocking defeats and Pyrrhic victories.

Only an artist as skilled as Williams, paired with a writer who can think in four dimensions, such as Morrison, could produce the sort of kinetic and visually challenging art seen in this issue. The page on which Gloriana arrives to "eat the whole world" is a shockingly powerful composition, in which conventions of time and space seem to fold in on each other to create a unified, everlasting now. From this point on, the reader becomes inextricably implicated in the story unfolding.

By the end of this issue, the Seven Soldiers have saved the world from the Sheeda queen. But, with one soldier ascending to unholy power, another enslaved, yet a third retired, and (of course) the death of one soldier at the hands of an unchallenged evil, what chances are there against the next cosmic threat? Roll the dice ...

www.dccomics.com

Sidekick #3
Image
$3.50, color, 28 pgs., available now
Writer: Paul Jenkins; Artist: Chris Moreno
reviewed by **Shaun Manning** ★★★½

After a falling-out with the dimwitted Mr. Excellent, the non-powered Eddie Edison (aka Superior Boy) offers his services to Night Judge, Justice Princess, and Brother Commando. Eddie must be a heck of an interview, because he's now apprenticed to all three heroes, adding to his original responsibilities to Mr. Excellent. Conflict of interest? Oh, yes ...

When a comic book's tagline is "You will believe an inflatable sex doll can fly," one should expect something outside the typical super-hero fare, and that's exactly what Jenkins and Moreno deliver. All of the characters are played as "types," but the mix of all these ridiculous heroes plays well. After teaming up to club the Night Judge's sidekick, Brother Commando returns to his rap-studio headquarters to record a def jam, using "The Stoat's" screams as backup vocals. Yeah, it's crude (and not the most offensive bit in this issue), but Paul Jenkins knows how to pull a good gag.

www.imagecomics.com

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Dan Walker

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Star Wars: Dark Times #1

Dark Horse

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now

Writers: Welles Hartley, Mick Harrison; Artist: Doug Wheatley

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★

The latest title in Dark Horse's revamping of its acclaimed *Star Wars* line upholds the impressive tradition recently set forth with *Legacy, Rebellion,* and *Knights of the Old Republic.* This series takes place between *Episodes III* (last of the new trilogy) and *IV* (first of the old).

Much of the galaxy is in chaos, and the ruling Empire doesn't seem to know how to handle things, though it continues its march from star system to star system with swift and sure results. As for the newly crowned Darth Vader, he's also getting used to his role as right-hand man, supreme intimidator, and the second-most-feared person in existence.

The best piece of character development comes from Vader, not the protagonists. It's interesting to see an uncertain Vader not yet adjusted to the assured confidence he displayed in *Episode IV.*

In general, Hartley and Harrison have put together a well-told tale that should please die-hard *Star Wars* fans and newbies alike. Likewise, Wheatley's art is superb, beautifully portraying both the characters and their environments.

This is a title not to be missed by *Star Wars* fans, even those not collecting any other Dark Horse *SW* titles.

www.darkhorse.com

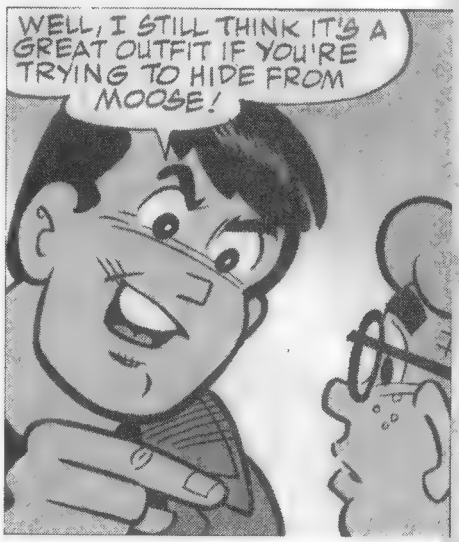
Archie #570

Archie

$2.25, color, 32 pgs., available now

Writers: George Gladir, Bill Golliher; Artist: Stan Goldberg

reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★★



Archie #570 features four cute, highly accessible stories. Actually, "The City Library" doesn't really qualify as a story. It's more like a well-meaning advertisement for the Salt Lake City Library. It's neat to see Archie and the gang so excited about visiting the titanic tower of tantalizing tomes, but it breaks a cardinal rule of fiction with its utter lack of conflict.

Next up is "The True Geek!" — which finds Archie donning dorky duds to try to pass himself off as a chic geek. Unfortunately for Archie, clothes truly don't make the man, leading to a funny surprise ending that reveals the identity of the true geek of Riverdale. Third in line is "The Not So Great Outdoors," in which Archie and his dad going on a camping trip that's disrupted by a rampaging moose, setting the stage for a preposterous (if mildly amusing) sequence involving dear old dad. Finally, "To Act or Not to Act" has Archie and Reggie competing for the same part in a play by acting like each other.

www.archiecomics.com

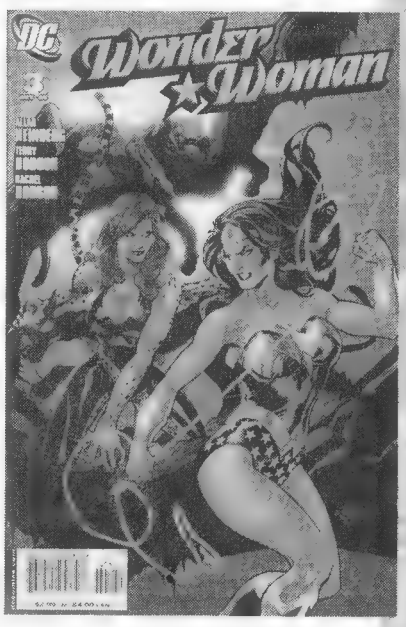
Wonder Woman #3

DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now

Writer: Allan Heinberg; Artists: Terry and Rachel Dodson

reviewed by **Karen O'Brien** ★★★½



Yes, it's late. Get over it. The art alone was worth the wait.

Writer Allan Heinberg is using the third issue of his five-issue run to pivot the story (yes, there's a story happening here; go back, read all three in a row, and pay attention this time) in a new direction. Sure, we've seen her change costumes, lose her mantle to be replaced by another champion, and question her role in the world. But, with Diana's powers removed in an excellent twist, we just may see Diana grow and learn to solve problems alongside mankind rather than above it: something I've witnessed only in Paul Dini and Alex Ross' beautiful *Wonder Woman: Spirit of Truth.*

Speaking of the art — it's outstanding. Terry and Rachel Dodson provide a bold, clean look for one of DC's flagship characters, a look that this title has long deserved. I'm not sure why the costuming was changed for Cheetah and Dr. Psycho, but it was well conceived. Alex Sinclair's colors are over the top, perfectly appropriate, and lovely. Hooray.

www.dccomics.com

Marvel Holiday Special 2006

Marvel

$3.99, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★

Unencumbered by convoluted storylines or complicated continuity considerations, holiday specials from Marvel and DC are almost always enjoyable. This year's offering from Marvel is a disappointment. It features three accessible stories, each of which adheres to the aforementioned boundaries. Unfortunately, the issue is padded by eight pages of cover reproductions from previous holiday specials and six pages of "holiday ornaments." It's all in good fun, of course, but these elements take away from what could have been additional story pages.

Stories include: "A.I.M. Lang Syne," a mildly amusing look at office parties, annoyingly divided into four sections; "How Fin Fang Foom Saved Christmas," a cynical, satirical, tongue-in-cheek take on Christmas (guest-starring Hydra); and "A Is for Annihilus," an alphabetical poem that finds The Thing home alone on a snowy evening. The issue also includes the text-heavy "Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe: Santa Claus."

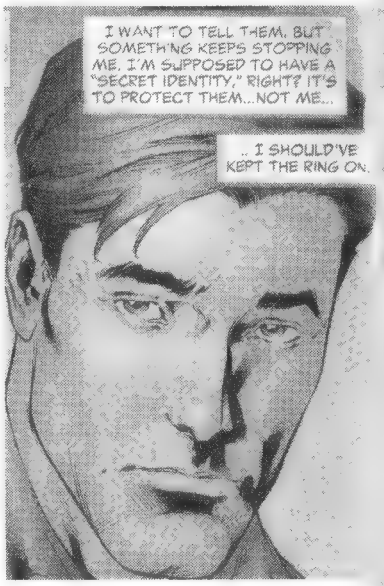
The art and stories are pleasant enough, but fans looking for a holiday classic will have to search elsewhere.

www.marvel.com

Green Lantern #14-15

DC

$2.99@, color, 32 pgs.@, available now
Writer: Geoff Johns; Artist: Ivan Reis
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★★½



Hal Jordan has come a long way since he went insane (to make a long story short) during the 1990s. He has since been exonerated of his infamous murder rampage, but trouble still follows him wherever he goes. In "Wanted: Hal Jordan" Chapters One and Two, Hal is haunted by his prideful decision not to wear his ring while flying a plane, putting his buddies (Cowgirl, who becomes a prisoner of war) in peril during a dangerous mission. He also finds himself at odds with The Global Guardians, Russia's Rocket Red Brigade, and a certain other super-group that shall remain nameless.

If the first two installments are any indication, this story arc is top-notch, filled to the brim with personal conflict, epic action, and even a few surprises (one of which involves Abin Sur). In addition, Ivan Reis, following ably in the footsteps of the great Ethan Van Sciver, has made this series his own. From robustly drawn battles to painfully rendered flashback sequences, Ivan's illustrations beautifully complement Johns' words.

www.dccomics.com

Marvel Milestones: Legion of Monsters, Spider-Man, and Brother Voodoo

Marvel

$3.99, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★

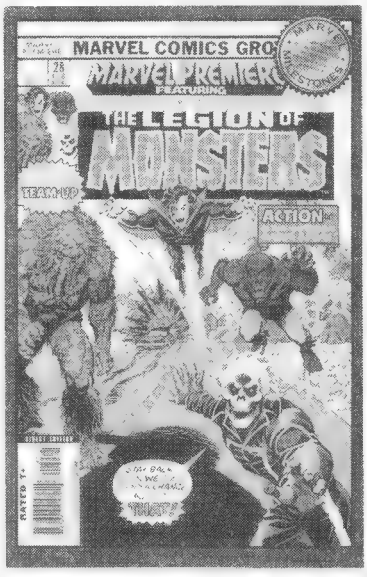
What wonderful 1970s lunacy. In the lead story, a mountain appears in downtown Los Angeles. Who should appear to investigate but Ghost Rider, Werewolf by Night, Man-Thing, and Morbius the Living Vampire? (Where are all the superheroes? I guess Reed and Cap didn't get there in time.)

Aside from the fact that they are all monsters, it is an odd gathering. For starters, Man-Thing and The Werewolf don't talk. (Morbius, on the other hand, won't shut up.) Also, Man-Thing is based in the Florida Everglades, which is apparently a mere stroll from Los Angeles.

Next up, Spider-Man and Captain Triumph — excuse me, Brother Voodoo — battle an off-Broadway voodoo cult in a *Marvel Team-Up* tale that appears to have been striving for racial relevance. It's fun and does have some wonderful Jim Mooney art.

Finally, we get a black-and-white flashback to how Dracula became Lord of the Undead.

The lead stories are kind of wacky and would probably never fly today, but they're great as nostalgia for simpler times and simpler tales.



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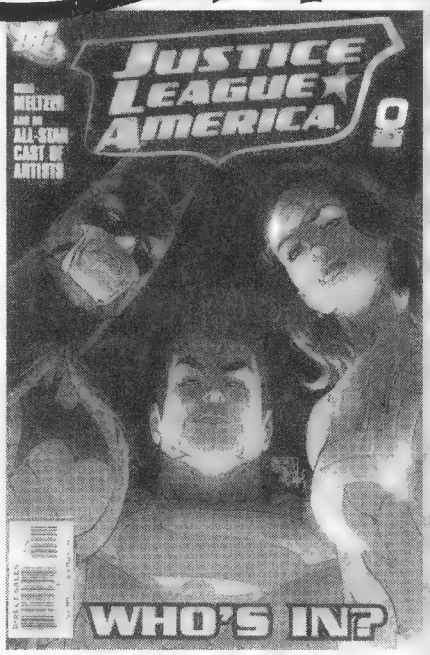
Sometimes our reviewers just don't agree!
OBLIGATORY FIGHT SCENE!

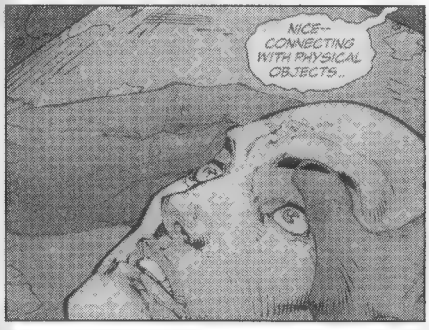
Justice League of America #0-3
DC

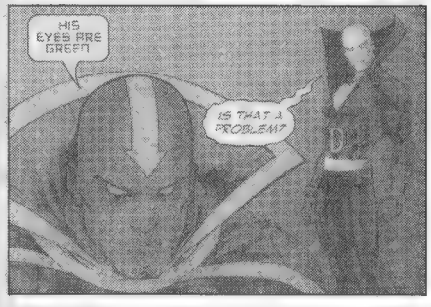
#0, 2, 3: $2.99@, color, 32 pgs.@, #1: $3.99, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writer: Brad Meltzer; Artists: Ed Benes, Sandra Hope, et al.
reviewed by **Jim Johnson and John Petty**



Jim Johnson: Team titles are always subject to an additional level of criticism beyond that of a solo super-hero series, because for many readers the team roster defines the quality of the comic book as much as the creative roster behind it. Perhaps writer Brad Meltzer knows this and maybe that's why he gives DC's Big Three an important role in this series, starting with the very first page. The roster of Justice League of America, the team, may not have jelled yet, but the roster of *Justice League of America*, the series, certainly has. Meltzer has immediately snagged readers' interest, and artists Ed Benes and Sandra Hope reward that interest with beautifully rendered interiors that will readily please those brought up with the works of George Pérez and Phil Jimenez. I initially wasn't all that geeked about this project in light of many of DC's disappointing post-*Infinite Crisis* relaunches, but its release won me over immediately. But you're probably not feeling the love, are you, Snapper?

John Petty: Can't say I am, Marvin. Whatever happened to the concept of a team series actually being about a team? What we have here so far are a bunch of unrelated characters doing … stuff. And what's the "important role" that Meltzer gives Supes, Bats, and WW? Sitting around a table for four issues looking at photos? They look like three old geezers lounging around the rec room table at the Old Super-Heroes Home endlessly reminiscing about the old days. "Remember that boy, Flash? Heh, heh, what a scamp he was …" Way to protect the innocent, guys! Meltzer seems to have forgotten that he's writing monthly serial fiction here, not chapters of a novel. Something actually has to happen in each and every issue to encourage people to keep coming back. So far, he's failing at that task. I know I keep ranting about the current trend of decompressed storytelling, but, at $3 an issue, the return on investment in this book is pretty thin.





Johnson: You should replace your copies of those issues, then, because I think a bunch of the pages must have stuck together. Perhaps you missed the ongoing plot with Red Tornado, in which Deadman seemingly transplants his mind and powers into a permanent, human body. Not enough for you? How about Red's subsequent, conflicting emotions regarding the frailties of his own humanity? More action, you say? There's Green Arrow, Black Canary, etc., going up against dozens of Professor Ivo's Red Tornado doppelgängers. No, there's plenty happening, even with the Big Guns sitting behind closed doors. So far, Meltzer has given this franchise the shot in the arm it so desperately needed; the book hasn't been this much fun since Grant Morrison's run on *JLA*.

Petty: Congratulations. You've successfully summarized everything of consequence that's happened in four issues. What was Meltzer's proposal like for this book? "Batman, Superman, and Wonder Woman look at pictures, while random stuff happens for several issues. Then I go to the bank"? Yeah, and an android conflicted about his growing humanity? That's never been done before. Wonder where Meltzer got the Vision for that sequence? Not that I begrudge him his success, but, if you're not going to give something like this the commitment it deserves, let someone else take a shot at it; these four issues have been a splendid example of a project that feels as if it has been phoned in. *JLA* fans deserve better than this.

www.dcccomics.com

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Elvira's holiday prep is threatened by the most cosmic bean-counter of all, in **"Heed the Harold of Abacus, Collector of Worlds!"** Also, an axe-wielding maniac tries to spoil a females-only sorcery festival, in **"Best Holiday Witches!!"**

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EC ARCHIVES

Gasp ... choke ...

Must-have EC Archives

by KAREN O'BRIEN

Let's face it: If not for reprints, most of us would never have read the earliest adventures of our favorite comic-book characters. One of the first reprints I read was a paperback collection of Superman that I picked up for 50¢ through my elementary school's book order club. The 1950s stories were black and white, of course, but I learned all about Superman's complex relationships with Lex Luthor and Lori Lemaris. After all, what kid could afford a copy of *Superman* #129?

Reprinted collections of comic strips are proving to be quite popular with comics fans and the bookstore crowd. The *Peanuts* volumes are a hit, and this year we can add *Popeye* and *Dick Tracy* editions to our shelves. But what about comic-book reprints?

Gemstone Publishing recently released two must-have volumes from its new *EC Archives* line: *Weird Science* Vol. 1 and *Shock SuspenStories* Vol. 1. Introduced with forewords by George Lucas and Steven Spielberg respectively, these impressive high-quality hardcover collections may be the most stunning releases of the year.

Among the stories collected in* Shock SuspenStories *Vol. 1 is "The Patriots" (above) from* Shock SuspenStories *#2 (May 52).

***Weird Science* Vol. 1**
Gemstone Publishing
ISBN: 1-888472-58-5
$49.95

This volume collects the first six issues of the seminal science-fiction comic book *Weird Science*. Originally cover-dated between May-June 1950 and March-April 1951, each issue contains multiple adventures written by Al Feldstein, whose creative genius shines through, as each story turns on a fascinating element of "what if" that confirms, denies, or stretches some element of science.

The thought-provoking ideas behind the well-constructed stories were intended to move the reader beyond entertainment into their own search for questions and answers. For example, "Destruction of the Earth" deals with nuclear testing in the Pacific Ocean. When an atomic bomb scientist begs Washington officials to delay testing of their newest H-bomb, he presents them with calculations showing that the detonation will throw the Earth out of its orbit and into the sun's gravity. Ignoring the warnings, the test proceeds, and the scientist's predictions come true.

An artistic triumph, the work of Al Feldstein, Harvey Kurtzman (who would later found *Mad* magazine), Wally Wood, and others is gritty and charming, and the color style of the original issues is lovingly reproduced (and improved). The volume also contains *Origins of the EC Comics* by Grant Geissman, providing a fascinating history of the company M.C. Gaines founded and the answer to the question, "Why is the first issue of *Weird Science* #12?"

***Shock SuspenStories* Vol. 1**
Gemstone Publishing
ISBN: 1-888472-57-8
$49.95

"Jolting Tales of Tension in the EC Tradition!" is the subhead adorning the covers of EC Comics' *Shock SuspenStories*. Leaving the fantastic "what if" tales for *Weird Science*, this title concentrated on social commentaries often known as "morality tales." Publisher Bill Gaines didn't shy away from controversial topics and, with writer Al Feldstein, they created a socially relevant comic.

As Steven Spielberg noted in his foreword, "While most of the comic books were devoted to costumed super-heroes, Archie, and Donald Duck, Bill Gaines was using the medium to educate his audience, like his father before him."

Featuring poignant tales written to sound as if they could happen to someone you know (or you, yourself), *Shock SuspenStories* drew in its audience and drove home its message with a sledgehammer. One of its most memorable, "The Guilty," discusses racial injustice in a story predating Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* without pulling punches. It was one of EC's first "preachies," a nickname provided by Gaines and discussed by Editor Russ Cochran in a special article, "EC's Morality Tales .... The EC 'Preachies.' "

According to Gemstone Publishing Executive Editor and Associate Publisher J.C. Vaughn, "The reaction to the *EC Archives* has been wonderful. Initial sales were solid, and the re-orders have been outstanding. We actually thought they'd take a little more time to build up momentum, but terrific reviews from inside and outside the industry have really helped spread the word."

Next in the *EC Archives* series are *Tales from the Crypt* Vol. 1 and *Two-Fisted Tales* Vol. 1, followed by six more volumes in 2007. But be warned: If you're considering buying these volumes as gifts, buy two. Once you peek inside a copy, you won't be able to part with it.

KAREN O'BRIEN is a book editor for Krause Publications. She may be reached at *karen.obrien@fwpubs.com*. Send her review copies to 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990.

Tour of the INDIES

INDEPENDENT AND SMALL PRESS

REVIEWS

PICK OF THE MONTH INDY

Super Real #2
Superrealgraphics.com

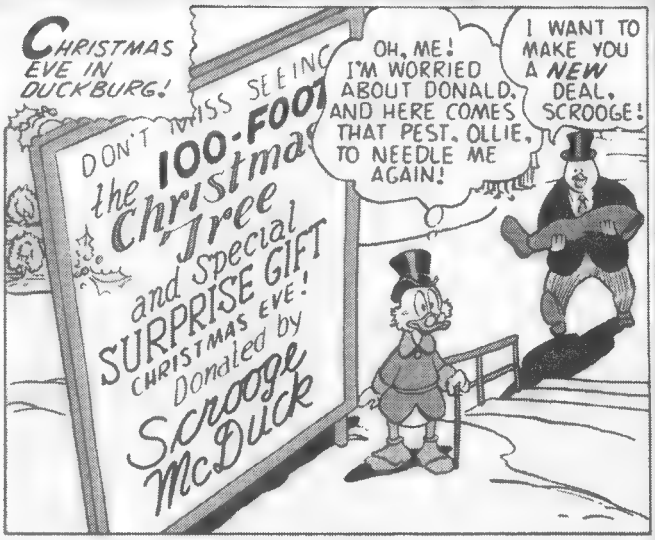
$3.25, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Jason Martin
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★½

This comic is *The Real World* meets super-heroes. Not a bad concept. The characters, for the most part, are self-absorbed, beautiful people that are being manipulated by the network's producers. Some are unabashed media whores, drug addicts, *etc.* If creator Jason Martin can keep his sarcastic edge, I could grow to really like this book. He also uses a mixture of photos with the art, a touch that I really enjoyed.

In this issue, the cast arrives at their new home. There is a secret government conspiracy here, but unlike most comics that use some sort of vague group (dark suits and sunglasses), Martin uses the current president and vice president. (No small jump in logic that those two would be caught up in the power of having super-heroes at their disposal.) Who are really the good guys here? It is yet to be seen. Jason Martin is taking his time laying the groundwork, so it's not too late to jump on board. The trip looks well worth the ticket price.

www.superrealgraphics.com

Walt Disney's Christmas Parade #4
Gemstone Publishing
$8.95, color, 80 pgs., available now
Writers: Various; Artists: Carl Barks and various
reviewed by **Michael Tierney** ★★½

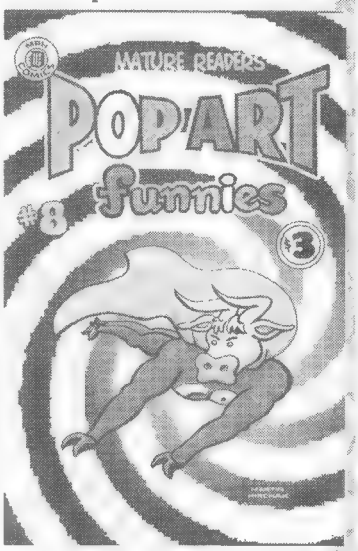


Christmas stories by Carl Barks defy time and should rank in the company of Dickens and O. Henry. In "Christmas in Duckburg," the master Duck Man with collaborator Bob Gregory provides another fun-filled tale about Donald Duck and his nephews dealing with the dilemmas that only the holiday season can bring. Uncle Scrooge is once again involved in a bet that he will do anything to avoid losing, and the Beagle Boys will do anything, including moose rustling, to prevent him from winning. Events are further complicated when Donald and Uncle Scrooge both foolishly make "Duck's Honor" vows before knowing the details of their pledges. Barks brings it all together with his usual flair and trademark sight gags.

Way back in 1949, the very first *Christmas Parade* was also the first *Dell Giant*. In keeping with tradition, this latest incarnation includes holiday tales of various Disney characters, both classic (including the first reprint of a 1932 Floyd Gottfredson short) and modern, including a story scripted by John (*Last Kiss*) Lustig about Mickey Mouse's travails while helping with Minnie's gift-wrapping and delivery business.

http://gemstonepub.com

Pop Art Funnies #6-8
MPH Comics
$1 (#6), $2 (#7) $3 (#8), b/w, 32 pgs.@, available now
Writer and artist: Martin Hirchak
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★★½



The Motor City has long had a strong connection to comics fandom and the amateur press; the late Jerry Bails, legendary fan and apa-founder, was from Detroit. So is Shel Dorf, co-founder of the old Detroit Triple Fan Fair, and, oh, yeah, the San Diego Comic-Con. So it should come as no surprise that Martin Hirchak, another Detroiter, has created a comic book that seems straight out the haze of early era of fandom and underground comix.

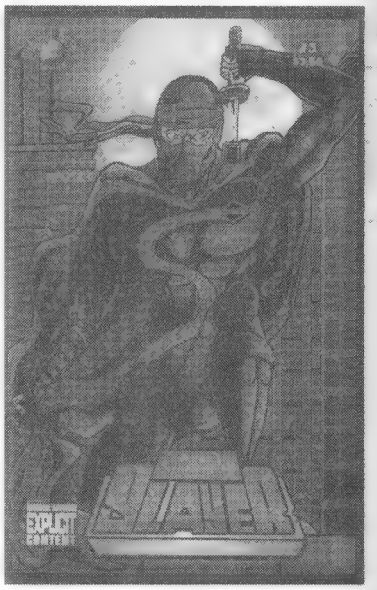
Hirchak has been quietly at it for a few years now, and people are taking notice; his first issue had a humble 2,000-copy print run, but his latest boasts an impressive run of 11,000. This troika of issues spotlights Hirchak's newest creation, the crime-fighting Superbull, a columnist who was gored by a radioactive circus bull and then exposed to voodoo magic. Really.

Yeah, really. Really funny and really evocative of such old underground faves as Gilbert Shelton's *Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers* and R. Crumb's *Zap Comix*. Evocative, not derivative, because past issues have featured other distinct adventurers. Like Wally, the Super-Intelligent Hotdog from a Far and Distant Planet.

Really.

MPH Comics, P.O. Box 441906, Detroit, MI 48244

Slayer #3
Midnight Horizon Comics
$2.50, b/w, 24 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Kenny Keen
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★½



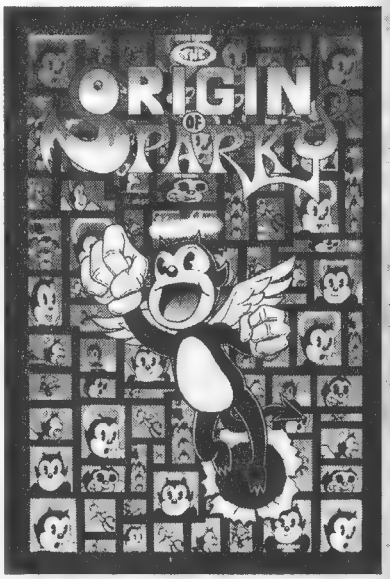
Slayer's art is reminiscent of the early art on one of my first comic books. And, as in that case, it's not ready. It's hard for me to say that, since the creator cites that same comic book as his inspiration. Unfortunately, the scanning process seems to have pixilated some of the art. There is lots of action, but, as in many other super-hero universes, the costumes go unexplained. It's just sort of assumed, "Hey, everyone dresses up and fights crime or commits it."

Writer Kenny Keen undermines the female police detective, making her unnecessarily weak and submissive. The problem with putting these sorts of characters in the grim and gritty world of street crime is that their costumes are impractical. The mask you can understand, but the cape is nothing but a handicap on the street.

That said, the series is not without merit. The pacing is fast and furious, and its grim and gritty subject matter is not without its charm. Keen just needs to buckle down on his anatomy, use a straight edge whenever possible, and make doubly sure all the blacks are the same level of darkness.

www.midnighthorizon.com

The Origin of Sparky
Awakening Comics
$2.99, b/w, 32 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★½



Remember when *Secret Origins* presented four different origin tales for The Phantom Stranger? Here, Steve Peters goes several steps further, as he and his students present an entire issue of origin tales for his flagship character, Sparky.

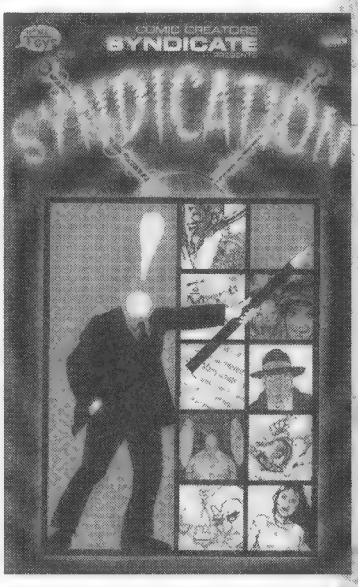
Sparky is ostensibly an anthropomorphic cat character, but with two noteworthy sets of traits: He has an angel's wings and halo and a devil's tail and horns.

The takes are varied and different. From the Kundalini origin (in color on the back cover) to an origin set in1963 Dallas, there's something for everyone and jam pieces galore. Peters' cartooning students rub shoulders with such pros as Matt Feazell, James Kochalka, and Dave Sim.

It's always interesting to see different creators go in different directions from the same starting point. The down side here is the presumption of an emotional investment in Sparky on the part of the reader. Sparky is probably unknown to most and not of great concern to the rest, so this one-shot is not going to generate the interest of, say, Marvel's *Origin*.

www.awakeningcomics.com

Syndication
BuyMeToys.com
$4.99, b/w, 72 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★½



Boy, do we need more of these comics. The Comic Creators Syndicate put together the *Syndication* anthology and it is well worth the look. Here are just a few of the stories:

"The Ballad of Dr. Ecula": It's about a group of thugs hiding out in a super-villain's abandoned hideout. One of the thugs remembers the old villain and goes over some of the history. The gang gets more than they bargained for.

"The Escrimadora" was my favorite. It's about native Filipinos fighting Spanish Conquistadors in the 16th century Philippines. Escrimadora is like a hot, kick-ass martial artist. It was written by Nik Havert with sweet art by Ryan Sargent.

"Child Rowland to the Dark Tower Came" is about knights confronting aliens. At first I thought it was going to be your typical fantasy story, but when the aliens arrived it got pretty crazy! I'd love to see more of this, although the pencils didn't look inked and I wished they were.

Clearly, there's a lot to offer here. These days, 72 pages for $5 isn't that bad. It barely has any ad space or filler. Support anthologies, order this now.

www.buymetoys.com

Strangers in Paradise #84-85
Abstract Studio
$2.95@, b/w, 24 pgs.@, available now
Writer and artist: Terry Moore
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★½

Only five issues remain in one of the most influential and longest-running independent comic-book series ever published. Last year, creator Terry Moore said he would conclude his series in May 2007, and that issue — #90 — is coming far too quickly for his legions of fans.

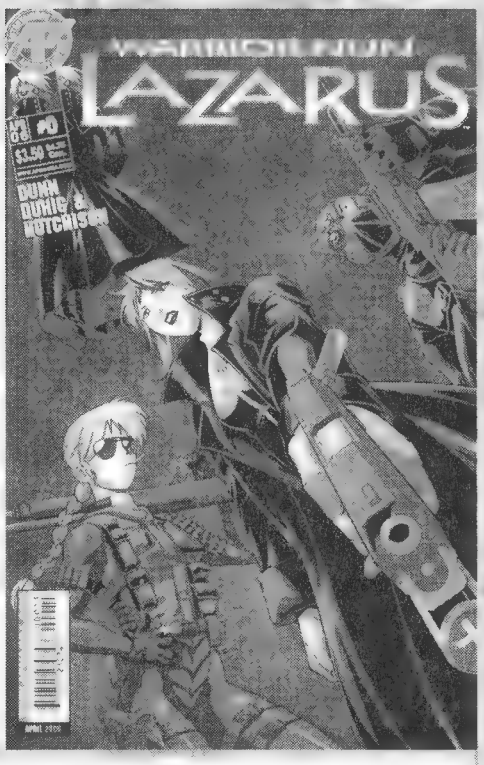
Building up to that landmark, the story of Katchoo, Francine, and David (and Casey and Tambi and a few others) continues as strongly told as ever. David's battle with the almost-certainly fatal brain tumor brings the gang together, but now Francine's out to win Katchoo, with Casey standing guard. Then, there's the whole David trying to impregnate Katchoo thing, too.

It's a busy, busy plotline: much going on, and Moore handles it masterfully, as he has always done. While now is not an ideal jumping-on point, the series is heading directly toward something rare in the comics industry: a rock-solid legacy. While Moore's fans will miss *Strangers* and look forward to his next comics project, all involved can be assured that the series looks as if it will conclude with the same incredible quality which it has built all along.

www.strangersinparadise.com

Warrior Nun Lazarus
Antarctic Press

$3.50, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Lee Duhig; Artists: Duhig, Ben Dunn, David Hutchinson
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★



The Warrior Nun universe has a long and proud pedigree, going back to its roots in *Ninja High School*. But after an auspicious start and many strong years, things cooled off. Later series were in less-than-glorious black and white and were padded with reprints. Now, the *Warrior Nun* franchise returns to its former glory.

Areala, the best-known sword-slinging Sister, is nowhere to be seen, but such other familiar faces as Father Crowe are on hand. The story is full of intrigue, with nothing more blasphemous in it than the basic premise — that warrior nuns exist at all. The art is some of the nicest this side of the Sistine Chapel. OK, that's an overstatement, but it's still pretty nice.

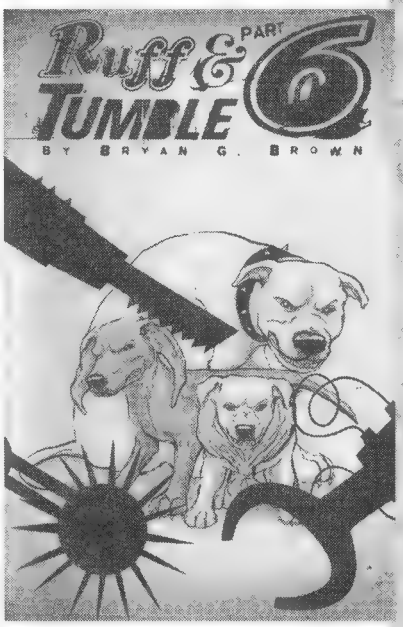
Lee Duhig is a comics jack-of-all-trades. He writes, shares the art duties, colors (with Guru-EFX), and even letters.

If you long for the glory days of Warrior Nunhood, fret no longer. Those days have come again.

www.apmanga.com

Ruff & Tumble Part 6
Bryan G. Brown

$2.50, b/w, 28 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Bryan G. Brown
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★½



Ruff & Tumble is about a group of super-powered dogs and their creator, who turns out also to be their nemesis. The dogs, although super powered and able to talk, still don't understand that their creator is evil until late in the story. Their minds are still a lot like dogs. The creator, Cramer, dupes them and they slowly begin to realize they've been his unwitting pawns.

It's a very different take on super-heroes and the art is very cool. Cramer has these weird robots with giant fists. The dogs are sort of like his Frankenstein monster, probably destined to destroy him. The dogs have amusing names like Snowball and Buddy, but it doesn't undercut the seriousness of the storyline.

Visit Bryan Brown's website; it has a very cool design. I don't know why creators keep leaving the price off their books, but this is totally worth it. If you want something different in the way of super-heroes or if you just like dogs, buy Brown's comic.

www.hirebrown.com

Deadly Artisans #1
Epsalon Press

$2.50, b/w, 24 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Jan-Michael Franklin
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★½

Deadly Artisans features two government assassins with cybernetic implants. Creator, artist, and writer Jan-Michael Franklin doesn't quite grasp all the implications of "government assassins." This is almost a textbook example of a rookie comic book. Aside from this being the United States, where we're not supposed to assassinate people, he fails to make a convincing case that the U.S. government would waste its time killing drug dealers and rapists. (Wouldn't it be easier to kill the ones in prison?) It's also not clear why the duo needs to exercise, since their implants apparently replace their arms and legs.

Franklin does get points for inserting a solid relationship between the two characters. A husband and wife team of cyber-killers is an interesting premise. Something like that would have probably helped a series like *Cyber Force*. Franklin's art is OK but also needs more polish. The gray tones are done well, but the pencils still need work. He should use a straight edge when drawing something like a car. Though he's on the right path, this isn't the right project yet.

www.epsalonpress.com

Impossible Tales #1
After Hours Press
$3.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writers: Darren Sanchez, Hassan Godwin; Artist: Michael Harris
reviewed by **Ian M. Feller** ★★½

Combine *Quantum Leap*, *Jurassic Park*, and *The Poseidon Adventure* and that's just touching the surface of what *Impossible Tales* is about.

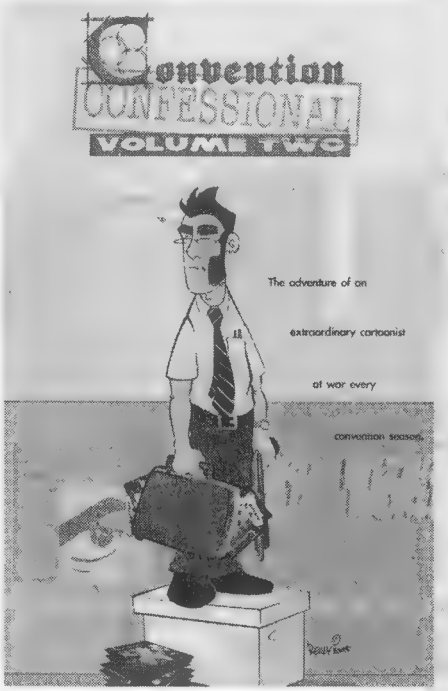
A scientist from the far future steals a time-travel device and, in a final effort to escape his captors, jumps back into modern times and lands aboard an ocean liner preparing for launch. When his would-be captors find a way to follow him, his only choice is to jump again. This time, he pulls the ocean liner and its unsuspecting crew and passengers with him. When they reappear, they realize they're floating on a Cretaceous sea.

The story is an engaging mix of familiar science-fiction elements. The first issue does a nice job of introducing the main character and the premise and setting things up for what is sure to be a wild ride.

The overall quality is top-notch. The printing is first-class, and the sketches and other back matter add value to the price.

www.ahpcomics.com

Convention Confessional Vol. 2
Skatoon Productions
$3.95, b/w, 32 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Rob Reilly
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★½



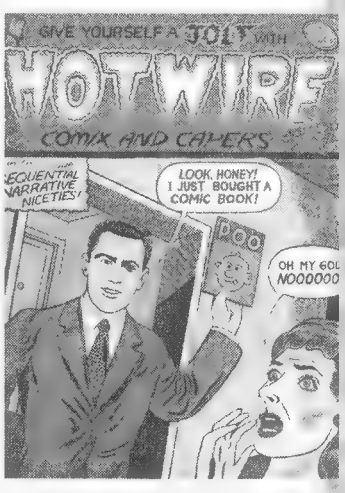
I'm not normally one to promote comics about the industry. More often than not, the stories become too "inside" and are jammed full of comics buzzwords that only an insider would understand. *Convention Confessional* is not like that.

Rob Reilly's brilliance shines, as he skewers the comics world, its fans, and its wanna-be pros. My favorite story involves a well-meaning fan who intercedes to ruin everything, when Rob tries to hook up with a hot fangirl at a convention.

Some fans may find the humor too acid for their tastes, but they will be the likely target of future Reilly skewerings. (Get a sense of humor already!) Reilly's art is fun and keeps the energy high.

www.skatoonproductions.com

Hotwire Comix and Capers GN
Fantagraphics
$19.95, color, 136 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★★



If anyone wondered what underground comix would have been like had they been born in this decade, this volume contains more than 30 examples that dare to try to answer that question.

Matt Madden's "F*** Freely and without Fear!" reads like a clever and modern version of a *Twilight Zone* episode told in sequential form, R. Sikoryak's "Mephistofield" is a hilarious Garfield-as-a-demon spoof, and Michael Kupperman's "The Scaredy Kids" features his own usual nonsensical dry wit. In other words, these efforts affirm that undergrounds are actually alive and well; we just now call them "independents."

On the other hand, Johnny Ryan's "My Mother the Idiot" is an unremarkable example of his usual tasteless and so-not-funny array of toilet humor. Doug Allen's "Hot Rod Hillbillies" condenses all the well-trodden stereotypes into two pages. And Rick Altergott closes things out with another annoying, pointless installment of "Doofus." These entries do their best to ensure that this book never sees the outside of a head shop.

In between are stories from creators like Sam Henderson, Ivan Brunetti, and Tony Millionaire that put this volume as a whole into the black. Black light, that is.

www.fantagraphics.com
ISBN 1-56097-728-0

Gravy Boy #3
Jack Rabbit Stewdios
$2.50, b/w, 24 pgs., available now
Writer: Marty Blevins; Artist: Brian Shearer
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★

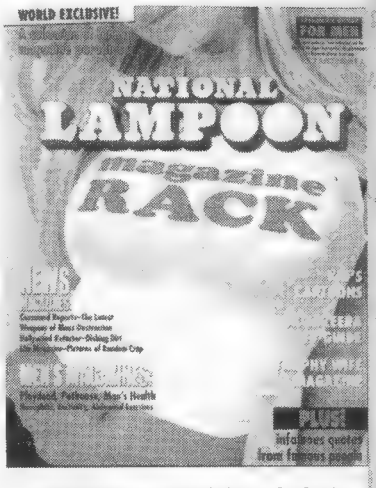
Advance information on *Gravy Boy* made it sound like a hilarious send up of super-heroes. The art and the graytones are solid, and the dialogue is OK, but Gravy Boy is treated like a "legit" super-hero. Writer Marty Blevins is only mildly funny, whereas a comic book like *Gravy Boy* needs big laughs. Blevins will need to pull out all the stops, if the comic is going to live up to its hilarious name.

In the old days, a character like Gravy Boy would've been a funny back-up story in a regular series. Then, once in a while, he'd get his own spin-off special. The sad truth is that a concept like Gravy Boy can only be taken so far. After you've milked all the super-hero spoofs (which have already been done to death) and after you've milked every gravy-related scenario, your only hope is to move on to more ridiculous super-heroes and a more ridiculous world of super-heroes. It worked with The Tick.

Ultimately, comedy is not about a particular subject matter, especially such an over-analyzed and over-parodied subject as super-heroes.

www.gravyboy.com

National Lampoon Magazine Rack
National Lampoon Press
$17.95, color, 208 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★



Remember when *National Lampoon* was a magazine, not just a movie brand? *NatLamp* outlived its time, caught in a downward spiral of unfunniness, but for years it was the one to beat. In addition to comics, "True Facts," and "Foto Funnies," one of the great recurring features was a parody of a competing magazine (occasionally, their own).

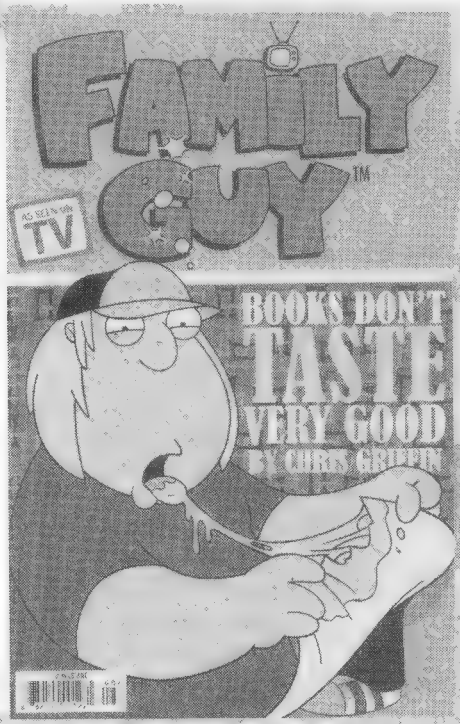
Reprinted herein are such classic parodies as *Mad*, *Playdead* (a necrophiliac *Playboy*), and *Real Teen*. There is additional material from the *National Lampoon* website, including *Consumed Reports* and *Al-Jazeera TV Guide*.

Not all of the material is family-friendly — most noteworthy an adult parody of Nick Fury and the aforementioned *Playdead*. Readers unfamiliar with *National Lampoon*'s brand of humor will no doubt be tipped off by the cover's double entendre, juxtaposing the title "Magazine Rack" with a close-up of a woman's chest. (Don't worry — most of the interior humor is a notch above that.)

There's more than enough material for a second volume, as well as a collection of comics including *Verman* and *Son o' God*. Bring 'em on!

www.nationallampoon.com
ISBN 0-9778718-0-0

Family Guy: Books Don't Taste Very Good by Chris Griffin
Devil's Due
$6.95, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writer: Matt Fleckenstein; Artists: Various
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★



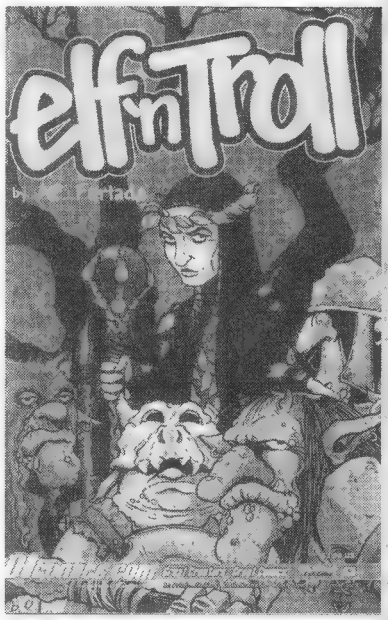
This issue of the *Family Guy* comic (#3 in tiny print on the inside cover) is written by one of the *Family Guy* writers, Matt Fleckenstein. The plot is very much like the *American Dad* episode in which Stan thought his Arab neighbors were terrorists. This time, it's Peter who makes the mistake.

Chris, the Griffins' son, is the centerpiece of the issue, and Fleckenstein does a cheap bit where Chris stares at the reader for two pages. Nevertheless, overall, it's funny. In usual frantic, *Family Guy* fashion, it jumps from comedy bit to comedy bit and throws in a few good flashbacks.

The cover price is steep, but there are few ads and, as with earlier installments featuring Dad Peter, the story does feel like a full episode.

www.devilsdue.net

Elf 'n' Troll
01comics.com
$3.50, color, 24 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: A.P. Furtado
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★



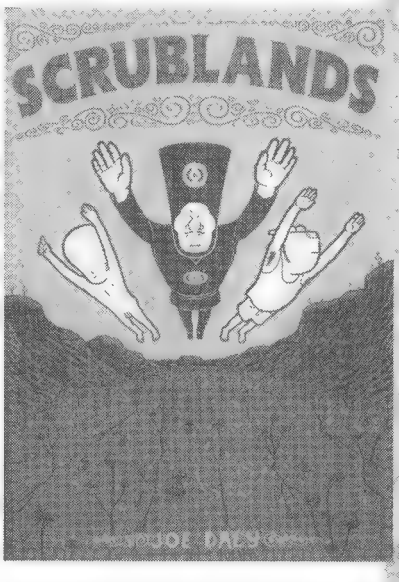
Elf 'n' Troll is about an elf named Perri and his friend, Angus, a troll. It's kind of like a buddy movie set in a medieval universe. Perri has been captured by goblins and Angus must save him. He crosses paths with Paris, a mysterious blonde with a sword who may be friend or foe. The goblins are about to sacrifice Perri to a local witch and it's up to these two to save him.

If you're a fantasy fan, you'll find it solid fodder for your *Dungeons & Dragons* game. As a bonus, creator A.P. Furtado includes a map of the duo's quest and marks each spot where the events of each issue take place. 01comics.com proudly proclaims this book "Creator Owned!" Good for them, I say. They should be proud. You'll always be more likely to get top-notch work from your creators when they have a vested interest in the creation.

From the publishers of *Lunatic Fringe*, here is another gem. I say, buy it.

www.01comics.com

Scrublands GN
Fantagraphics
$16.95, color, 128 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Joe Daly
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★★½



How does one describe the indescribable?

How about this? South African creator Joe Daly, in his first published work in America, has turned in one of the best graphic novels of the year.

Not enough? This anthology, whose entries range from several single-page stories to one 70-page epic, all touch on such unrelated but recurring themes as birth, eroticism, religious intolerance, and mind-altering substances. And vegetables. And Bruce Springsteen.

More? Daly does all this in a variety of writing styles, from comedy to drama to a sense of the mundane. And with an impressive array of artistic styles, as well, from that of R. Crumb to Peter Bagge to Gary Larsen (*The Far Side*). Far from disjointed, this eclectic set of efforts is not only ripe with meaning on literal, existential, and surreal levels, but it also serves as a superb showcase of Daly's endless talent. It's not hyperbole to say that this graphic novel is like nothing else out there — and it excels because of it.

www.fantagraphics.com
ISBN 1-56097-744-2

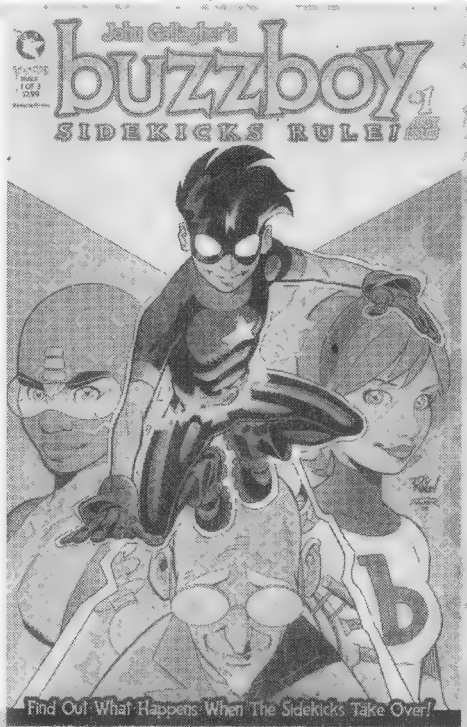
Buzzboy: Sidekicks Rule #1
Sky Dog
$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: John Gallagher, Rich Faber
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★

Retro super-hero comics are not my thing. I think super-heroes are already overdone and, if I want '60s Kirby-speak, I'd rather read the original. John Gallagher's *Buzzboy* has been around cons for years. This latest entry is about sidekicks taking over for the super-heroes and it gives us insight into the events leading to the disappearance of Buzzboy's mentor. He and the other young heroes-in-training end up living with Doc Cyber, a reformed supervillain. The art for the story is nice, as is the art for the back-up story about a character called Roboy, a robot boy/super-hero.

Calling the work derivative doesn't quite cover it. Gallagher's energy and enthusiasm clearly shines. He loves his character and it makes you want to like him, but I can't. Buzzboy is like eating a well-prepared pizza after eating nothing but pizza for the last 10 years. It makes me wonder what Gallagher could do if he put all his time and energy into something different.

If you're looking for something harmless and inoffensive to give to your kids, you can't go wrong with *Buzzboy*.

www.skydogcomics.com



The Oz/Wonderland Chronicles #0
BuyMeToys.com

$2.99, color, 24 pgs., available now
Writer: Ben Avery; Artist: Casey Heying
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★

There's a weird new subgenre of fantasy: Take children's stories and revamp them, clicking up the violence a little or a lot and adding hot chicks. Ben Avery and Casey Heying do this with characters from both Oz and Wonderland.

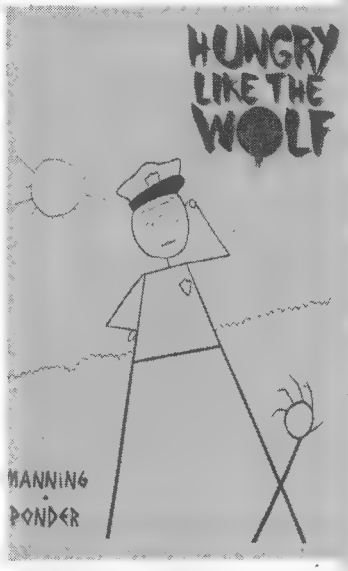
There's not enough in this preview to really provide a sense of where this series may go. Some kind of war is brewing, and Dorothy and Alice (or perhaps the *new* Dorothy and Alice) are in modern times. They are hotter and sexier, and the cover seems to suggest that at least one of them is into girls.

Ultimately, the publisher may squeeze good sales out of it, but what sort of fan is it attracting? It's not likely to be one that's interested in revamped fairy tales. It's probably unrealistic to treat your main female characters like sex objects and expect the audience to see them as complex heroes.

www.buymetoys.com

Hungry like the Wolf/Tonight
Manning and Ponder

$1, b/w, 16 pgs., available now
Writers: Dirk Manning, Stacie Ponder; Artist: Ponder
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★



This mini-comic of stick figures was hilarious. *Hungry like the Wolf* was a love story between two werewolves, and *Tonight* was about a creepy doll that avenged the death of the family she lived with. (It's amazing what you can do with stick figures.)

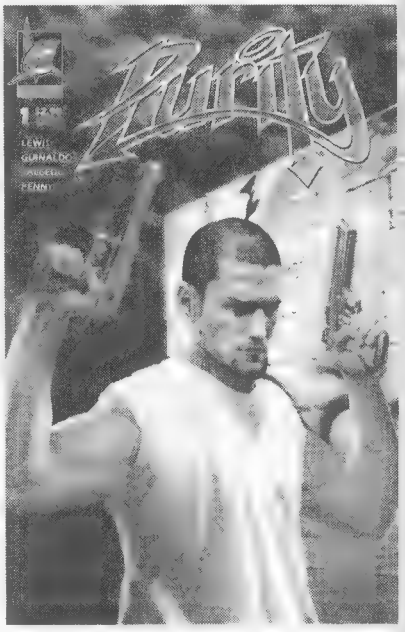
There's not much else to say about it. Part of its charm is that it does not rely on comic-book stereotypes, flashy art, or comic-book history to get across its humor. And, while funny, both stories are also kind of dark. There's a fine line between comedy and horror, and *Hungry Like the Wolf* skirts the edges of both.

The problem with most mini-comics is that the creators usually assume their comic book won't be respected because it's in a photocopied form. Sure, the format will turn some fans away, and the sloppy approach of some creators doesn't help attract potential new readers. But this little gem is a perfect example of what you can do if you put the right amount of care and talent into your book. Even though it's only stick figures, that's all it needs. There are too many grandiose comics that can't deliver on their ambitions. Read this, young creators, and learn.

http://finalgirl.blogspot.com

Purity #1
Dakuwaka Productions

$2.99, b/w, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Shawn Lewis; Artist: Andres Guinaldo
reviewed by **Ian M. Feller** ★★★



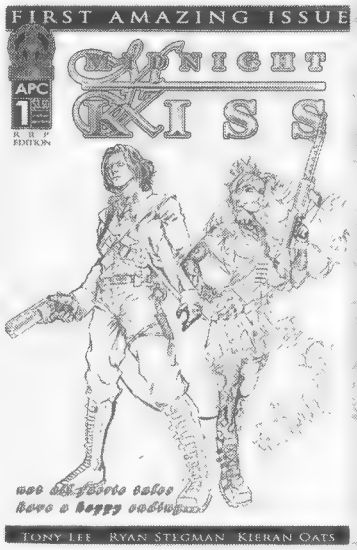
When you think of stories involving Heaven and Hell, God and the Devil, and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, you may not think right away of gritty, urban dramas. But with *Purity*, that's exactly what you get.

When the girl who holds the key to a mysterious element that will give the Horsemen the power of God goes missing, two agents — one from Heaven and one from Hell — are sent to find the one man who can locate and rescue her. His name is Michael Rome. And he's not the type of hero you'd expect in this situation. The story is fast-paced and action-packed, so, if bullets and barroom brawls are your thing, you're in for a treat with this issue.

All the action is brought to life in highly detailed black and white, with minor inconsistencies in perspective and proportion being the only flaws that keep this issue from a higher grade. Purity is an interesting new take on an age-old story, and you'll do yourself a favor by giving it a try.

www.dakuwaka.com

Midnight Kiss #1
Markosia
$3.50, color, 28 pgs., available now
Writer: Tony Lee; Artist: Ryan Stegman
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★



Midnight Kiss is about the world of fairies and their magical kin. However, instead of being flighty, wand-waving types, the fairies are not the sort often found in folklore. They are so dangerous they need gun-toting magicians to fight them — and the help of a special "chosen one" to save us all.

Sound familiar? Tony Lee has a strong concept and he's clearly done his research, but the formulaic set-up is tiresome. Can we please have a five-year moratorium on "Chosen One" storylines? On the other hand, however, two of the back-up characters, Johnny Cool and Flickman, are engaging: a pair of mercenaries who collect bounties on the various Fey. *Midnight Kiss* has potential and hits the ground running with the first issue. But, at 22 story pages, the action just gets going before it's over, and readers have to wait another month to find out why the local cops have found the body of a dead angel in the streets. With all the elements Lee jams into his story, it's a question why he even bothered with the "Chosen One" plotline.

Markosia is producing many quality series, but can fans keep up at $3.50 a pop?

www.markosia.com

Xena #1-2
Dynamite Entertainment
$3.50@, color, 32 pgs.@, available now
Writer: John Layman; Artist: Fabiano Neves
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★

Two issues in, this series is already handling the concept of "War of the Gods" better than the late, but unlamented, DC mini-series of that name. This time, it's the Egyptian pantheon versus the Greek. True to form, each pantheon selects Earthly champions to battle for them. (Guess who ends up on the Greeks' team?)

The art is beautiful and beautifully colored, but the images of Xena and Gabrielle, while recognizable as Lucy Lawless and Renee O'Connor, are not exactly dead-on likenesses. (Second bananas Joxer and Autolycus more closely resemble Ted Raimi and Bruce Campbell, respectively.)

There have been Xena series before, but this is one of the better versions. It's especially appreciated, now that the series has been relegated to the Elysian Fields of DVD. If Xena, Gabi, Joxer, and Autolycus weren't enough to scratch even the most die-hard enthusiast's itch, hang around long enough, and uber-baddie Callisto shows up. (Moreover, there's a blink-and-you'll-miss-it Ares cameo.)

Need Xena? She's back. (Now can we have that Wonder Woman crossover Topps promised?)

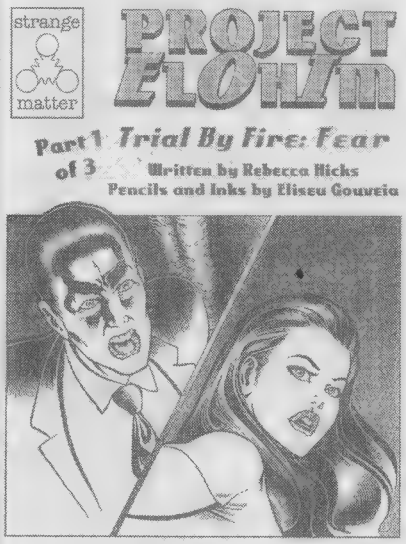
www.dynamiteentertainment.com

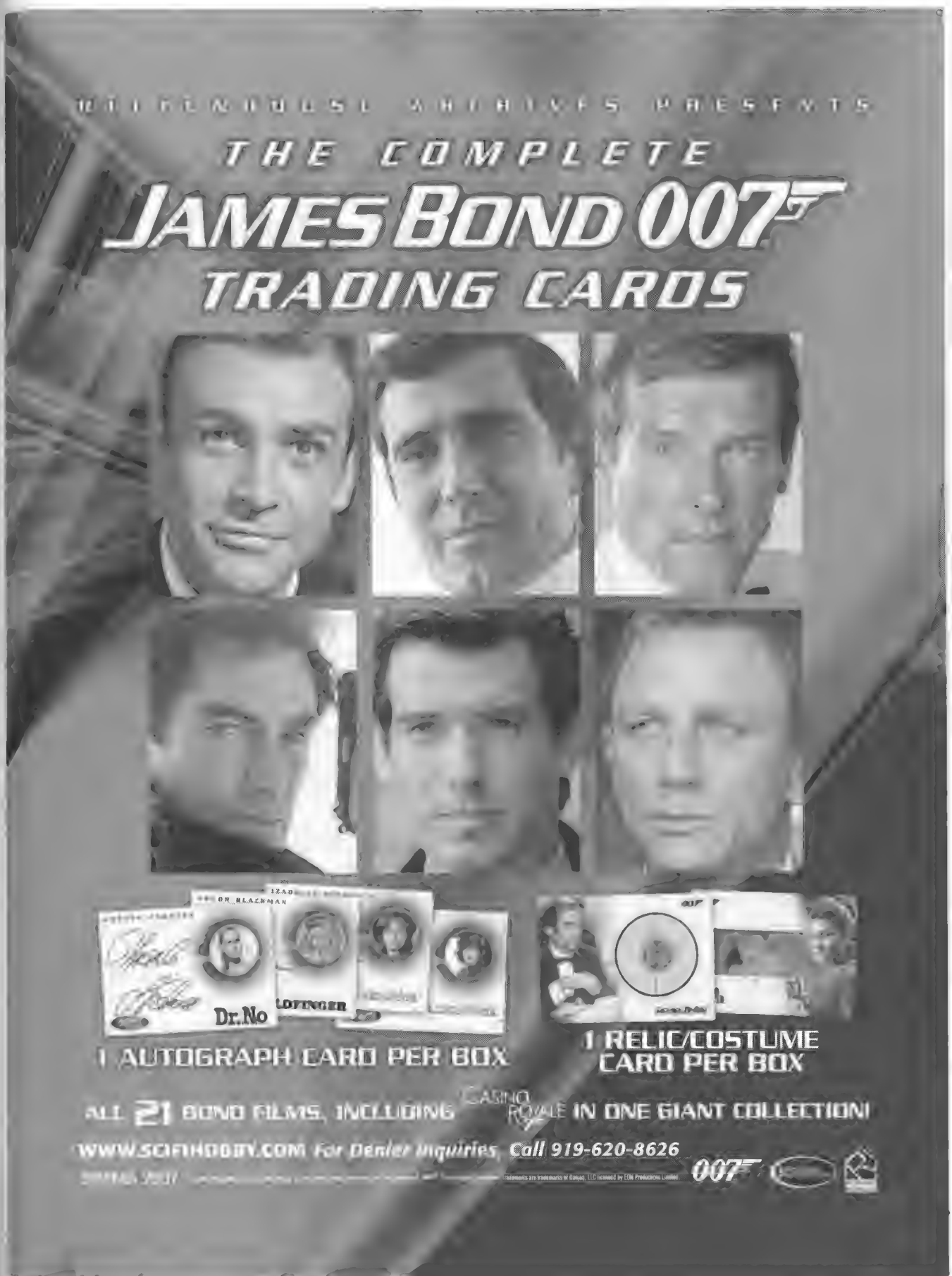
Project Elohim: Trial by Fire: Fear Part 1
Strange Matter
Free, b/w, 6 pgs., available now
Writer: Rebecca Hicks; Artist: Eliseu Gouveia
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★

Project Elohim was a Special Wizard World Preview. According to the cover, the first three issues will be available in the Spring of 2007. Our two heroes, Caitlan and Brian, are mutants born with powers. Caitlan can read thoughts and Brian can "control the temperature of matter." The couple are both in college and they're being chased by some beings that aren't shown in this issue.

Sounds to me like a by-the-book title with mutants, government agents (I'm guessing), and some rival mutants (I'm guessing again). Of course, I wouldn't have to guess so much if I had some more info or maybe a website link.

Eliseu Gouveia's art is neat and clear. I still don't like little small companies "bragging" about the "special" Wizard World preview. It seems like they're desperate for some sort of association with the magazine. Why? I don't think it gives the right impression for indie creators. People buy small comics because they meet the creators and they like them. I think they are setting up expectations for potential readers they cannot aspire to.

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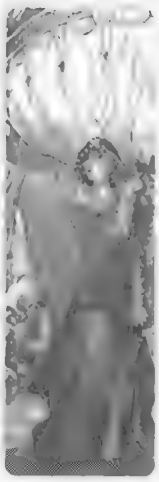


Fables: 1001 Nights of Snowfall

DC/Vertigo

$19.99, color, 148 pgs., available now

Writer: Bill Willingham; Artists: Various

reviewed by **Michael Tierney** ★★★★

If you've never read a *Fables* issue before, don't worry. This anthology is a prequel to the acclaimed comics series. Besides, there can be no strangers to the fables on which these stories are based. *1001 Nights of Snowfall* further illuminates the world created by writer Bill Willingham, where fanciful creatures from yesterday's imagination walk among us today.

This lavishly illustrated novel places Fabletown ambassador Snow White in the Arabian court of King Shahryar and in the role of his fated bride, Scheherazade, as the weaver of a 1001 tales of the Fables.

There are stories of mournful mermaids, tragedy and triumph, self-sacrificing kings, and tricky foxes. We learn more about the personal backgrounds of key characters, such as the traumatic childhood of Big Bad Wolf and Snow White's terrible secret involving several lecherous dwarves. Then, there's the encounter Snow and her sister Rose had with a witch who survived being burned in an oven.

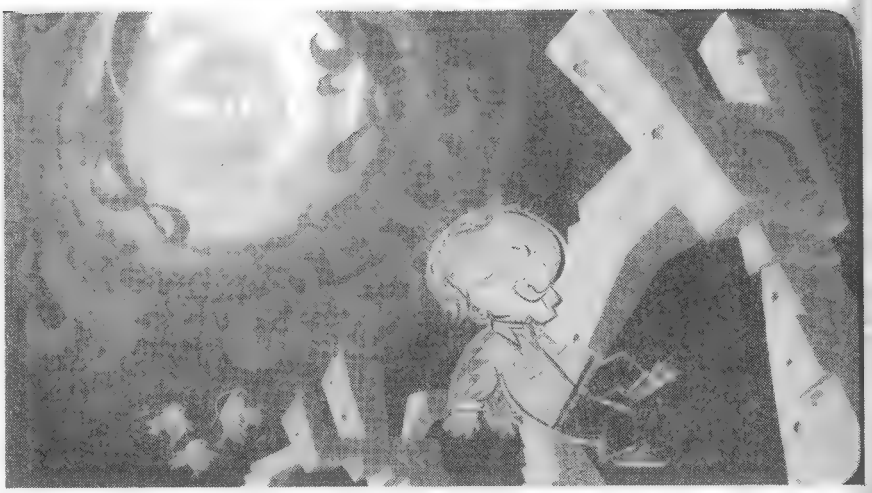
It's all familiar and it's all new, filled with gorgeous art that, like the gingerbread house, is all a treat. Indulge yourself.

www.dccomics.com

ISBN: 1-40120-367-1

Noble Boy GN
AdHouse Books

$12.95, color, 28 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Scott Morse
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★★½



Even though they might not realize it, there are few if any who have never seen the work of the late Maurice Noble. From art concepts and development for such Disney classics as *Bambi* and *Fantasia*, to direction and storyboards on numerous Dr. Seuss cartoons, Noble's career has spanned generations of children's all-time classics.

Creator Scott Morse ensures that Noble gets his due in this book-length poetic tribute, not only by emulating the stunning color work seen on many of his timeless projects, but also by narrating his story from the viewpoint of one who had the privilege of working with Noble, as one of his "flock."

Morse makes it clear that he considers himself among this flock, because Noble's influences on him are readily apparent. His narrative not only provides a peek into Noble's life and career, but is also a beautiful work unto itself. Its verse has an accessible charm, and his illustrations are a rich amalgamation of both Noble's style and his own. Fans of classic Disney owe it to themselves to get to know one of the men behind it all.

www.adhousebooks.com
ISBN 0-9774715-0-0

Neotopia: The Enlightened Age
Antarctic Press

$9.99, color, 96 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Rod Espinosa
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★

Set in a world of fairy creatures, flying ships, princesses, aliens, and strange magic, *Neotopia: The Enlightened Age* is the beginning of an epic saga. Nalyn is a lowly servant who replaces the Grand Duchess so she can ditch her boring duties. Of course, Nalyn is capable, honest, and noble, while the Grand Duchess is a spoiled brat.

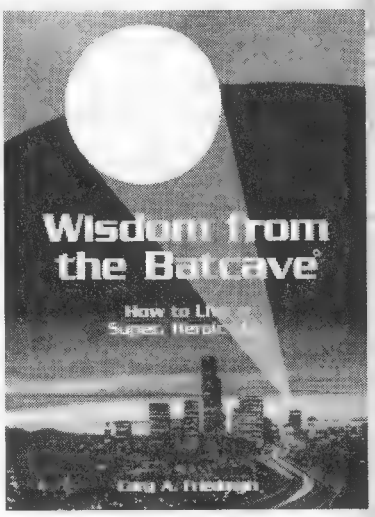
A plot unfolds in which a neighboring kingdom wishes the Grand Duchess' kingdom to return to its previous state: an industrial nightmare brought on by too much technology. Nalyn's romantic interest is a young, idealistic scientist who continues to experiment with advanced technology despite the kingdom's ban.

There's lots of detail here. The Grand Duchess is kidnapped and escapes via a daring rescue. There's a war that the Grand Duchess nearly ruins, but Nalyn saves the day. This is an all-ages book: quality manga that's readily accessible to an American audience. Even those who may be resistant to it at first will probably be sucked in, once they begin to read it.

www.antarcticpress.com

Wisdom from the Batcave
Compass Books

$13.95, b/w, 96 pgs., available now
Writer: Cary A. Friedman
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★



A rabbi, chaplain, and (believe it or not) consultant to the FBI, Friedman has written a book using Batman as an example of how readers can lead a "super, heroic life." Apparently, The Caped Crusader has been Friedman's lifelong role model, and here he shares the lessons he has learned.

Among the lessons Friedman has learned are to: work hard, inspire others, appreciate family and friends, and say no more than is necessary.

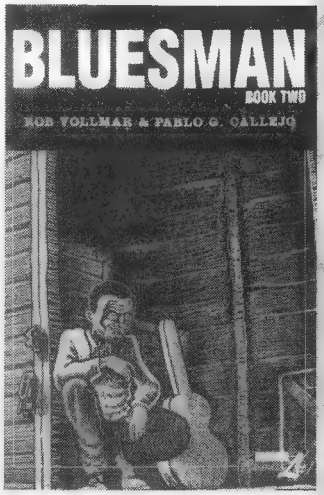
The chapters are illustrated with Batman art from a variety of eras, ranging from Golden Age comics to modern-day cartoons. Additionally, a number of professionals, who know Batman as well as anyone, chime in with praise for Friedman's message.

Wisdom from the Batcave is more spiritual than religious. Friedman does illustrate his points with sidebars that occasionally cite great rabbis, but examples are also drawn from the worlds of history, education, and business.

If you've ever looked for a thought-provoking way to express to others the values that even adults can gain from comics, *Wisdom from the Batcave* is just what the doctor ordered.

www.batwisdom.com
ISBN 0-9761966-2-X

Bluesman Book Two
NBM
$8.95, b/w, 80 pgs., available now
Writer: Rob Vollmar; Artist: Pablo Callejo
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★½



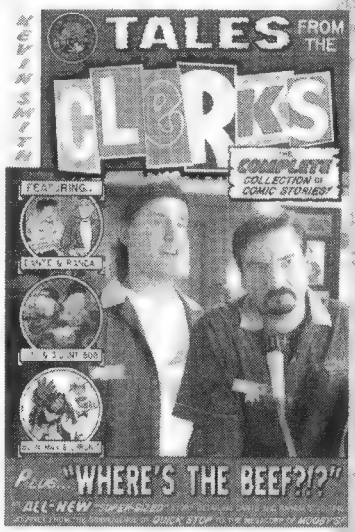
Two years after the first volume's release, NBM follows with the second chapter of Rob Vollmar and Pablo Callejo's *Bluesman* trilogy, set in 1920s Arkansas. In this installment, a young black musician is the surviving protagonist from the last chapter and is now on the run after bearing witness to multiple murders, one of them his musical partner. Meanwhile, the levelheaded Hempsted County sheriff tries to launch a fair investigation but is hindered by the racist district attorney, who is demanding blood, preferably from a black man — any black man.

While Vollmar's story disturbingly evokes the troubling feel of the Old South, it doesn't hold up well as a standalone; little explanation is given regarding past events. Attentive readers can piece things together, but even these efforts are hampered by Callejo's heavy-handed use of shading and darkness, which makes differentiating the characters difficult. The skin color of black, white, and Native American characters alike is hard to make out, making things more confusing than they need to be.

It's an enjoyable enough story, to be sure, but one that could have been better with more attention to creative fundamentals.

www.nbmpublishing.com
ISBN: 1-56163-456-5

Tales from the Clerks
Graphitti Designs
$29.95, color and b/w, 400 pgs., available now
Writer: Kevin Smith; Artists: Various
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★½



This giant compendium of Clerks comics starts with the obligatory new material, in this case, "Where's the Beef," the untold tale of how Dante and Randal got their jobs at Mooby's and how Dante met his fiancée. Sadly, it's something of a tease, since readers are not then treated to a full movie adaptation.

Following the new partial-story, readers are presented with classic comics from the View Askewniverse. The *Chasing Dogma* mini-series is there, as are *Bluntman and Chronic* and the various *Clerks* one-shots. There are even some rarities, such as "Walt Flanagan's Dog" and "On the Perils of Cinema."

The continuity of the comics is dubious. *The Lost Scene* has been added as an animated bonus to the latest version of the DVD, but much of *Chasing Dogma* appears to have been retconned out by the film *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*.

The all-star artist line-up includes Jim Mahfood (who was born to draw *Clerks*), Mike Allred, Matt Wagner, and Michael Oeming.

In short, this volume is a must-have for the *Clerks* connoisseur.

www.graphittidesigns.com
ISBN: 0-936211-78-4

Family Guy: Brian Griffin's Guide to Booze, Broads, and the Lost Art of Being a Man
HarperCollins
$14.95, color, 112 pgs., available now
Writer: Brian Griffin
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★

Who better to administer advice about how to be a man — than his best friend? Brian Griffin, the family dog from the animated series *Family Guy*, gives his spin on how to live as a Y-chromosomer.

As in the series, the humor will have the audience laughing, crying, and often thinking (while smiling big), "Oh, wow, that's just wrong." With such chapter names as "Broads (and Why I'm Destined to Die Alone)," it's easy to see the gist of the book. (And, for the record, that's pretty much the only chapter name *CBG*'s editorial guidelines would allow in print.)

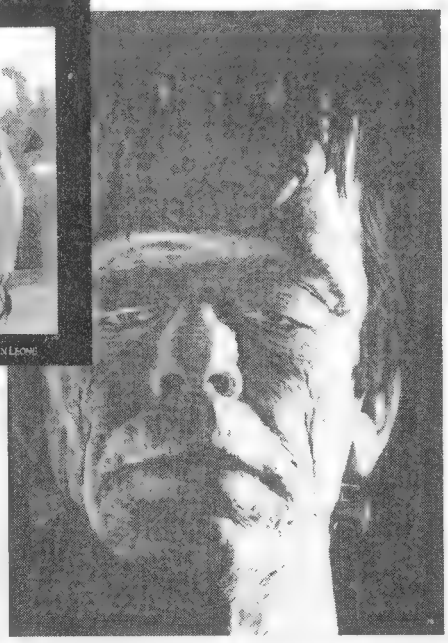
"Classy" ain't the word most likely to be chosen to describe this book, but that's beside the point (assuming there is a point). But you don't have to be a guy to appreciate the humor. In fact, in many cases, it might be best to have the objectivity of not being a guy.

As far as tasteless self-help spoofs go (is there such a thing as a tasteful self-help spoof?), this is one of the better ones. Pages will turn as if by themselves — which is one way of saying that you'll enjoy it, even if you're too drunk to remember it.

www.harpercollins.com
ISBN: 0-06-089920-7

James Bama: American Realist
Flesk Publications

$34.95, color, 164 pgs., available now
Writer: Brian M. Kane; Artist: James Bama
reviewed by **Michael Tierney** ★★★½



James Bama's work on *Doc Savage* paperback covers is what first made me notice his paintings. Combining realism with a wonderful use of color schemes and secondary lighting, Bama's covers were both fantastic and beautiful.

James Bama: American Realist is a book I might never finish reading. It's not just because every one of Bama's *Doc Savage* covers is reproduced. And it's not because the text isn't interesting. There's commentary from Harlan Ellison, Alex Ross, Dave Stevens, and many others, all providing accolades for Bama's work. The book is fascinating, from cover to cover.

But what happens every time is that, after a few pages, I find that I've stopped reading again and let the paintings carry me into their unique worlds.

Bama worked on a far more varied range of subject matter than I'd ever realized: from James Bond to *Star Trek*, from adventure-magazine and sports illustrations to model kits and tawdry paperback covers.

If you love a variety of illustration art, you'll love this.

www.fleskpublications.com

Satsu Review Summer '06
Satellite Studios

$3.95, color and b/w, 44 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★½

This magazine reprints the webcomics *Aliens with Attitude, The Whipmaster, The Mighty Tubularman, The Strange Case of M. Feratu, Post Nasal Drip Man,* and *Gangbusters.* Culled from various artists and writers, all components of the compendium are almost equally amusing, though *Gangbusters* had a little more depth and weirdness to it.

Aliens with Attitude was sort of like *Lilo and Stitch.* Imagine wisecracking alien kids being raised by an Earth mom; they get into all sorts of trouble with their human sister.

The Strange Case of M. Feratu is sort of like a vampire in the Wild West. *The Mighty Tubularman* is a straight up super-hero parody. *Gangbusters* is about a hard-boiled detective with a duck for a partner. It sounds ridiculous, but it is actually kind of creepy, as the duo is hired by a ghost.

The volume is worth checking out; failing that, hunt down the Web comics on which this is based.

www.satstu.com

Lost Girls
Top Shelf Productions

$75, color, 240 pgs., available now
Writer: Alan Moore; Artist: Melinda Gebbie
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★½

Odds are that by now you've read at least a few reviews of *Lost Girls.* The majority of these abound with praise and, for the most part, they are accurate judgments. *Lost Girls* is an enjoyable project that creatively puts explicitly adult spins on the classic stories *Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz,* and *Peter Pan.*

The story by legendary writer Alan Moore first saw print a decade ago, and now Top Shelf has republished it in a large, impressively packaged set. The package — large hardbound books with dustcovers inside a sturdy slipcase — weighs just over seven pounds and is pleasing to the eye and touch.

Moore's dialogue and writing in general are well done and, throughout most of the story, keep the pages turning easily enough. The art by Melinda Gebbie is superb, incredibly engaging throughout — arguably the star of this book.

What keeps this from being a four-star review is that, at times, the writing isn't as compelling as that rating would suggest, even verging occasionally on the juvenile. While this may be fitting, given that the characters in the classic stories are young, it nonetheless detracts from the narrative.

www.topshelfcomix.com
ISBN: 1-891830-74-0

Outlaw Nation
Image
$15.99, b/w, 456 pgs., available now
Writer: Jamie Delano; Artists: Goran Sudzuka, Goran Parlov
reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★

Originally published by DC's Vertigo imprint a few years ago, *Outlaw Nation* follows the misadventures of Story Johnson, a near-immortal member of the legendary Johnson clan. Story's claim to fame was that he "fictionalized" his relatives' wild adventures. After nearly a quarter-century of hiding out in Vietnam, Story finds himself back in the United States being hunted by another member of the clan, while their father orchestrates events from a secret sanctuary.

Each member of the Johnson clan is a piece of work to say the least, with Story's father one of the strangest. His Howard Hughes-like tendencies (reflective of the latter parts of Hughes' life) take away from Story's from time to time, but then writer Jamie Delano gets back to his main character.

With its casual sex, drug use, and references to armed insurrection, the story may not be for everyone, but it really works in this collection, where the reader can see the events unfold swiftly rather than waiting each month for the next installment.

While Delano mentions in the introduction that the series had to be quickly wrapped up when DC unexpectedly pulled the plug, it isn't obvious from the story, which proceeds at a breakneck pace throughout its run. So, why not four stars then? Because it was canceled in midstream. At least Delano and company were given the opportunity to wrap the story up, unlike *Sonic Disruptors* and its non-conclusion.

In addition to wondering if this collection signals more adventures of Story Johnson, one other question remains: Why didn't Delano have the clan complaining about the proliferation of "Big Johnson" T-shirts?

www.imagecomics.com
ISBN-10: 1-58240-707-x
ISBN-13: 978-1-58240-707-4

The Shazam! Family Archives Vol. 1
DC
$49.99, color, 228 pgs., available now
Writer: Uncredited; Artist: Mac Raboy
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★½

For this volume, at least, "Shazam Family" equals "Captain Marvel Jr." While his origin does not appear, having previously been reprinted in *Shazam Archives*, The Little Blue Cheese's solo adventures are reprinted in this spin-off *Archives* series.

Junior's adventures, illustrated by the incomparable Mac Raboy, were more serious than those of his mentor. While some Cap Jr. tales sneaked into the *Shazam!* giants of the 1970s, these war-time tales are, for the most part, previously unseen except by the most die-hard fans.

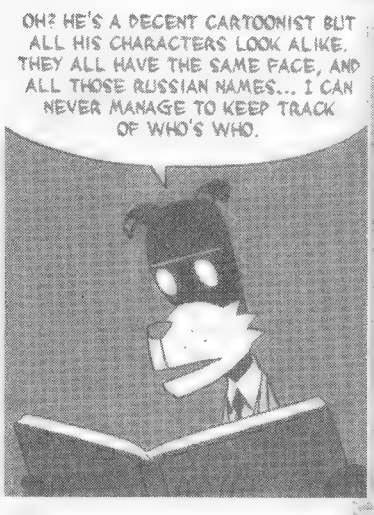
Casual readers may be surprised by Junior's recurring villains. Captain Nazi, of course, is familiar to modern readers, but the green-skinned killer Mr. Macabre may be new to many.

There is also a sensitivity to the physically challenged, given the fact that Freddy Freeman, Junior's alter ego, uses a crutch. This is the focal point of two stories that, while condescending by our standards, were sensitive at the time.

The last story, Mary Marvel's origin, features the whole Shazam Family and is a nice contrast to Junior's solo tales.

www.dccomics.com
ISBN: 1-4012-0779-0

The Left Bank Gang
Fantagraphics
$12.95, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Jason
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★★



What other creator would tell a story that requires turning four of literature's greatest writers into, gasp, graphic artists? Who else would further mutate them into his own trademark anthropomorphic creatures? And how many would craft a plot that would make these four respected writers turn to …

Anyway. Look at the book's cover if you want more clues. This gutsy volume takes place in an early 20th-century Paris where sequential art seems to be society's medium of choice. Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ezra Pound, and James Joyce are cartoonists whose talents have taken them to varying degrees of success. But it's not enough, so they seek to change their fortunes.

The book then takes a radical turn that would make most creators lose focus, but Jason stays true to established character development and how it plays into the story's shift. The twists near the end are brilliant but require careful attention to follow — and some of Jason's characters, as always, are difficult to tell apart. But it's typical Jason, which is to say that it's worth any inconvenience.

www.fantagraphics.com
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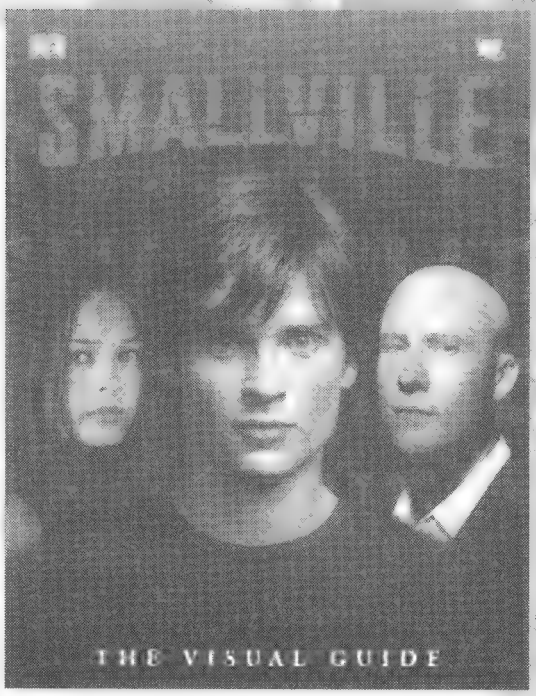
Smallville: The Visual Guide
DK
$15.99, color, 96 pgs., available now
Writer: Craig Byrne
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★



After reading *Smallville: The Visual Guide*, even those who have never seen an episode of the TV show can feel confident enough to discuss the minutiae of the show with regular viewers.

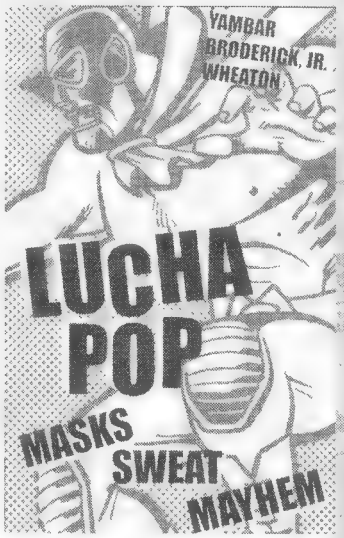
Smallville, as non-viewers may not be aware, is the story of young Clark Kent, growing up in the meteor capital of the world. This meteoric fame is a great addition to the legend; not only did the rocket from Krypton land in Kansas, so did much of the planet's remains. And, aside from its effect on Clark, the abundance of kryptonite causes mutations in many of the locals.

There's a lot of fun stuff in here for readers familiar with Kal-El's long history (and varying continuities). Lex Luthor and Lana Lang are expected to be on hand, being from Smallville in the comics. From there, readers progress to Brainiac, Mikhail Mxyzptlk, and Lois Lane, corresponding to characters in the greater Superman mythos. Finally, there are such characters as Arthur Curry, Bart Allen, and Victor Stone, representing the greater DC universe.

One question remains: Why isn't this, like many other DK volumes, an *Ultimate* Visual Guide?

www.dk.com
ISBN 0-7566-2360-X

Lucha Pop! GN
Airwave Comics/Comics Library Int.
$8.95, b/w, 64 pgs., available now
Writer: Chris Yambar; Artists: George Broderick Jr., Ken Wheaton
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★½



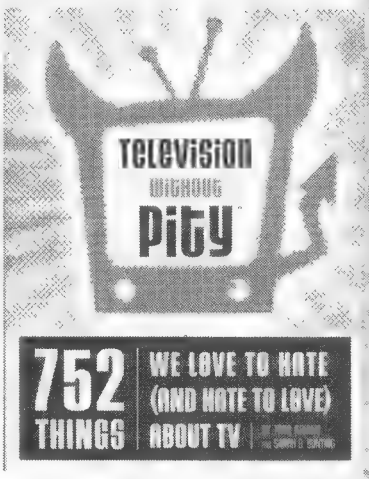
Frequent collaborators Chris Yambar and George Broderick Jr. bring some of their best-known characters together in this quartet of lighthearted, fun stories. "Best known," though, is a bit of a misnomer, not unlike a greatest-hits compilation by, say, The Other Guy From WHAM!

Yambar's modern beatnik Mr. Beat is probably the best known, although the character's appearance is little more than a supporting role in the comic-centric "Harvey Har Har!" Yambar's Mexican wrestler hero El Mucho Grande appears in this story and also in the super-hero parody "Fangs for the Memories." These two stories hit the funny bone dead on, but the book's other two, an OK Indiana Jones spoof, and a mildly amusing private-eye satire, only graze it. Yambar and Broderick's co-created heroine Suicide Blonde and Broderick's Courageous Man, who's been around nearly as long as Mr. Beat, are some of the other featured characters. But it's El Mucho Grande who gets most of the spotlight.

Enjoyable? Yes. Worth the price and trouble in finding? Debatable.

Airwave Comics LLC
P.O. Box 746
Bethel, CT 06801

Television without Pity
Quirk Books
$15.95, b/w, 304 pgs., available now
Writers: Tara Ariano, Sarah D. Bunting
reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★



The subtitle is apt: *Television without Pity* purports to be "752 Things We Love to Hate (and Hate to Love) about TV," and often it's hard to tell whether the authors are wryly reminiscing or truly complaining about a television indiscretion.

The copious cross-references in the entertaining book act as "hyperlinks" that will keep the reader flipping back and forth, but the coverage is a product of the generation of the authors, and the book is heavily mired in the '80s. Two quibbles: (1) The authors say that classic black-and-white sitcoms aren't funny. They especially single out *I Love Lucy* as unfunny. Hello? On what planet is *I Love Lucy* not funny? (2) The authors despise *Small Wonder* but name *Out of This World* as the worst sitcom ever. Sure, they both bite, but *Small Wonder* was way worse.

This is the kind of discussion and debate this book will no doubt encourage. If you're interested in the Batemans or in classic TV afros and mustaches, *Television without Pity* is worth a look. And check out the website *www.televisionwithoutpity.com*, while you're at it: Such current TV shows as *Heroes* are snarkily covered on a just-watched-it basis.

www.quirkbooks.com
ISBN: 1-59474-117-4

A Treasury of Victorian Murder: The Case of Madeleine Smith

NBM

$15.95, b/w, 80 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Rick Geary
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★★½

It may be hard to believe that this is already the eighth volume of Rick Geary's *Treasury of Victorian Murder* series since NBM first reprinted the then-out-of-print initial installment five years ago. But Geary's adaptations of brutal and sensational real-life crimes from the 19th century are far from wearing thin, and the latest continues to provide the fascination and attention to detail that made previous volumes compelling.

This time, it's the story of young Madeleine Smith, a rich socialite who falls for a man from the middle class, much to the chagrin of her high-society parents. Giving in to family pressure, she attempts to put an end to her secret relationship but has to take extreme, and deadly, steps when the attempted dissolution proves difficult.

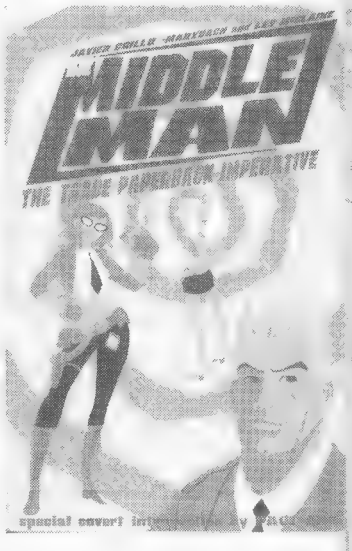
Geary's research, as always, is extensive in scope and flawless in execution. And that execution, as always, is told in an appropriately Victorian-style narrative that seems genuine, although it might come across to some as a bit dry. But there's no denying that he continues to mine history for incredible stories; he's done so again here.

www.nbmpub.com
ISBN 1-56163-467-0

The Middleman: The Trade Paperback Imperative

Viper Comics

$9.95, b/w, 120 pgs., available now
Writer: Javier Grillo-Marxuach; Artist: Les McClaine
reviewed by **Jim Johnson** ★★★



Um, does the reading public really need another comic with a suave, debonair hero? Or a sassy, butt-kicking damsel? How about an intelligent monkey?

Maybe, maybe not. But what readers can always use is a witty, attractive, and well-written comic book, regardless of its ingredients, and that's exactly what creators Javier Grillo-Marxuach and Les McClaine cook up. The hero of note calls himself The Middleman, referring to both his moniker and his place in the scheme of world-saving. The damsel is Wendy, whom he first rescues and who later becomes his sidekick. And the monkey? Well, that's more complex. And it's also one of the major elements of the story, one that's better seen than explained.

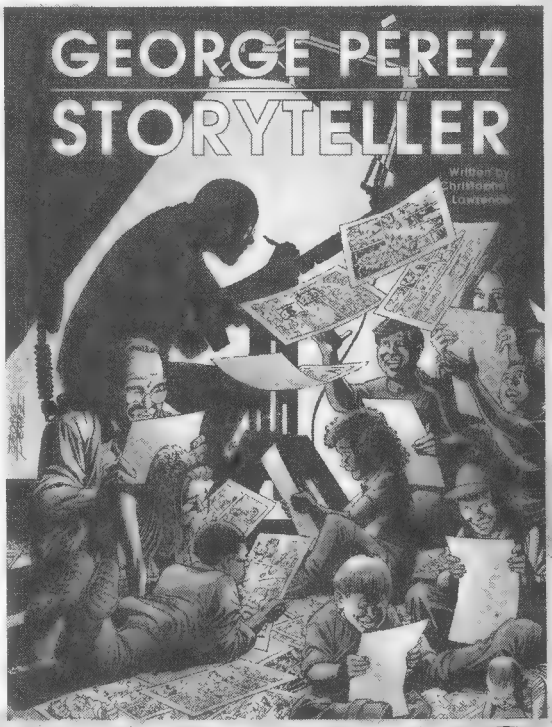
Imagine what super-heroes would be like in a *Men in Black*-type world and you get the general idea. While Grillo-Marxuach's story is clever, his real wit shows in the form of his characters' interactions, especially their biting dialogue. McClaine's art is clean, simple, and light, like G-M's story. Hey, you can never have too many heroes, damsels, or monkeys, so have a look.

www.vipercomics.com
ISBN 0-9754193-7-4

George Pérez: Storyteller

Dynamic Forces

$29.99, color, 210 pgs., available now
Writer: Christopher Lawrence; Artist: George Pérez, *et al.*
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★½

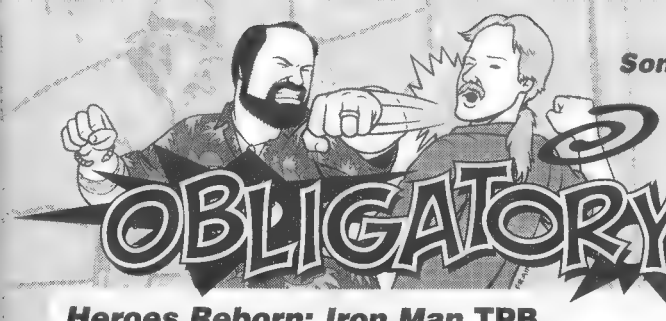


Yes, this is a requisite book for any George Pérez fan as well as for aspiring artists. If you have the money, buy it. It's certainly recommended, if for no other reason than that Pérez is a great guy, and the comics community at large confirms it, not only because his charitable track record is well-known.

However ... This is a book that should have been an easy four-star review. And, while it is an incredible book, it has a couple of problems, taking it "merely" to the 3.5-star tier. First, the images are sometimes from noticeably worn sources; better-preserved art — especially on the iconic images from his career — would have better served this presentation. Also, there are evident typos — even "Dynamite Entertainment" is misspelled in the appendix of websites.

Nonetheless, this is a rich history and entertaining page-turner of a book about one of comicdom's most legendary artists. Author Christopher Lawrence had Pérez' direct involvement in the project, and *Storyteller* belongs in the library of any serious comic-book reader.

www.dynamicforces.com
ISBN: 1-933305-15-0



Sometimes our reviewers just don't agree!

OBLIGATORY FIGHT SCENE!

Heroes Reborn: Iron Man TPB

Marvel

$29.99, color, 344 pgs., available now

Writers: Scott Lobdell, Jim Lee, Jeph Loeb; Artists: Whilce Portacio, Scott Williams, *et al.*

Discussed by **Jim Johnson and John Petty**

Jim Johnson: Well, no one asked for it, but here it is: a set of trade paperbacks collecting the decade-old, oft-maligned, year-long "Heroes Reborn" experiment. Just in time for the return of Onslaught, something else no one asked for. But, despite the controversy that this effort originally generated, Jim Lee and his WildStorm Studios came up with a pretty nice take on the characters entrusted to his care — and on ol' Shellhead in particular. Lee and co-writer Scott Lobdell took pretty bold steps, such as changing the personality of Tony Stark, tying the early history of Bruce Banner and The Hulk into Iron Man's, and giving IM's armor its first truly radical redesign. While it was ultimately an experiment that failed, at least it made for interesting (if temporary) reinventions, and *Iron Man* was the best of the lot, making this book a welcome release. I'll bet an old traditionalist like you just absolutely loved these stories. Heh.

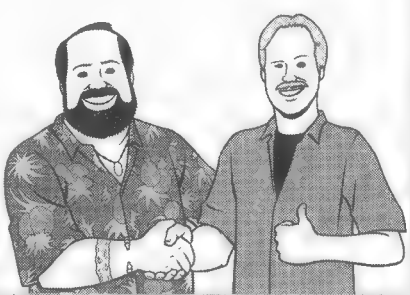
John Petty: Like the festering corpse of a dead leper, there are things that, once gone and buried, should never be exhumed. Such is the case with anything related to the abysmal affront to taste and decency that was "Heroes Reborn." While I'll grant that *Iron Man* was a slightly better effort than, say, *Captain America*, that's like saying anthrax is a somewhat more enjoyable disease than ebola. And what's with the smokestacks on IM's back? Originally powered by transistors, was this the all-new, all-improved coal-burning version? "Strain on heart … too great! Must … stoke furnace with … more anthracite!" While I'll give Lee & Co. an "A" for effort, this was a misguided, mishandled attempt to fix what was not broken, and it's to be hoped that this unwanted, unneeded TPB will pass unnoticed into the night and return to the compost heap from which it grew.

Johnson: Rob Liefeld's Cap has become the industry's dubious benchmark against which all that does suck is now judged. Anthrax might actually be better; here, sniff this white powder. But to say *Iron Man* wasn't broken before "Heroes Reborn"? I think you've shaken loose a few transistors. Remember that disastrous pre-HR *Avengers* arc "The Crossing"? Or the teenage Tony being snatched out of the past to replace his corrupt present self? Marvel's entire non-Spidey, non-mutant line stank so bad by this point that cleaning the house wouldn't fix it; it had to be demolished and rebuilt. At least "Heroes Reborn" did that, eventually providing a new launch point and beginning a new and better era for these titles. I kind of hated to see this incarnation of Iron Man go, but at least it made every one forget that Marvel had turned Tony Stark into a bad guy. Hmph. Like they'd ever try that again.

Petty: Now who's sniffing the white powder? Sure, Iron Man had fallen on hard times, but are you seriously arguing that this fixed him? All this did was bring the then-current Image philosophy of all style and no substance to Marvel, a trend that seems to have continued with "Avengers: Disassembled" and "Civil War." "Full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing." Those words rarely have seemed so apropos. Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, Larry Lieber, and the rest of the original Bullpen created a solid, workable world with solid, iconic characters. The more today's creators try to distance themselves from that original model, the more they fail. That's not to say there's no room for innovation or creativity, but nothing in the "Heroes Reborn" line exhibited any of those noble qualities.

Johnson: Hey, what could be more innovative than dual chrome smokestacks sticking up from Iron Man's backside? Um, don't answer that.

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 0-78512-338-5



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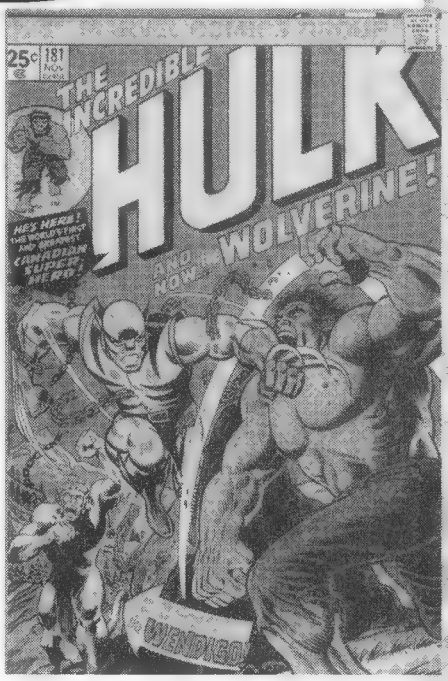
Incredible Hulk #181 (Nov 74)
Marvel

25¢, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Len Wein; Artist: Herb Trimpe
Discussed by **"Jovial" Jim Johnson and "Jumpy" John Petty**



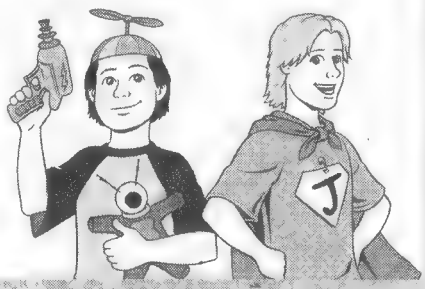
Jim Johnson: You know, I think this comic is starting to get good again. First there was that awesome Warlock story a few months ago, and now there's this really cool new character called Wolverine, who's called in by the Canadian government to go after The Hulk after he crosses the border. I'm glad Marvel's trying to bring in some neat new characters, because all The Hulk ever does is jump all over the country and break stuff and say things like "Hulk smash!" and "Puny Banner!" I hope we get to see Wolverine again, because he looks really mean and he's got these scary claws and he's badder than that other new guy from *Amazing Spider-Man*, The Punisher.

John Petty: You're kidding, right? A little shrimp in blue-and-yellow (Since when are wolverines blue and yellow, anyway?) costume with steak knives on his gloves? The Hulk should be able to sneeze and tear this little runt apart. He's even more pathetic than that other stupid Hulk villain, The Bi-Beast. And if you thought he was "mean" looking with "scary" claws, maybe you need a diaper change, little Jimmy. Sheesh. If Platypus ... er, Wolverine is the best super-hero Canada can come up with, it'd better stick with hockey, 'cause this guy has "loser" written all over him. He's so lame, not even Marvel's Grade-Z team, The X-Men, would take him. Maybe he can start his own Canadian Avengers and team up with Bigfoot, The Human Hockey Puck, and Monsieur Maple, eh? At least, The Punisher has a bunch of big guns. All Prairie Dog ... er, Wolverine has is a set of Ginsu knives from Ron Popeil.

Johnson: The X-Men? Who are they? Oh, yeah, some lame team from, like, five years ago. Maybe Wolverine should join. He might actually make that book popular. Or maybe he should come over to your house and slice and dice you with his "Ginsu knives" and make you wet your Underoos. You're right that The Bi-Beast was stupid, though, just like you. And most of the bad guys The Hulk has fought. But Wolverine's different; he's cool and he's got claws! And next time he does appear, I'll bet his costume will be different; remember how The Hulk and The Thing and Iron Man all changed from the way they first looked. Just because his costume is the same color as your pajamas is no reason to hate the character.

Petty: Heh, heh, really hit a nerve there, didn't I, diaper-boy? Ferret ... er, Wolverine could wear a tank top and jeans and an eyepatch and he'd still be a lame-o loser. It doesn't matter, though, 'cause I can pretty much guarantee you'll never see Muskrat ... er, Wolverine again. What good are his stupid claws when the Hulk pounds him into jelly? He's so lame, he didn't even get an origin! Most good characters at least get that, but not Weasel ... er, Wolverine. Next time we see this slob, he'll be popping open beer cans with his claws at the Old Loser Super-Heroes Home. Even the worst team of Avengers would laugh at this pathetic midget. Can you imagine Captain America taking this chump seriously, when his only super-power is opening beer cans without using his fingers? Please. And I'll bet The Punisher would rip his face off. So there. Hulk should've just torn him in half and been done with it. Instant Woodchuck ... er, Wolverine stew.

Johnson: Cool! Tearing Wolverine in half. That would be the ultimate. Tell you what: Instead of you tearing your copy of this comic in half, can I have it instead? This is gonna be worth big bucks someday, enough to buy me plenty of Smarties and candy bars to last until I'm, like, 20.



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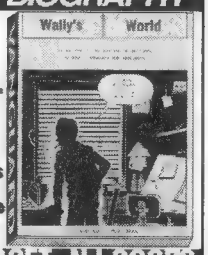

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The lines are drawn

The battle for shelf space

by BILL AGUIAR

As I write this more than a month removed from you, there have been several interesting news articles about the bookstore shelf space battle. They bring to mind the way comics and manga have been competing and creating shelf space in bookstores and comics shops.

Comics are meant to be displayed face-out, unlike manga, and most comics shops try to make sure every title is face out, especially for its release week. But the uncertain nature of the release cycle means that sometimes there are too many or too few titles for the spaces in a comic-book shop.

Meanwhile, bookstores have a limited amount of space, which they have been giving over more and more to the manga section. In less than five years, the manga section has gone from being crammed between role-playing-game books and a half-dozen graphic novels (mostly *Sandman* and *V for Vendetta* trades) to being far larger than both put together — and growing.

I do think that the growth of manga has had beneficial effects on the space allowed for graphic novels in this time period, though the questions remain whether that growth would have been fueled without the manga boom opening up space for American titles or whether there was a critical mass of American graphic novels that created the space for themselves. Someone who has better access to the sales numbers may be able to resolve those questions, but, either way, the graphic novel in bookstores is what is introducing new people to comics: There is little newsstand presence left for monthlies, and comic shops are specialty stores in which primarily the true believers shop.

Bookstores, at least the major chains, serve as a Darwinian testing ground for titles and genres. Using the most advanced sales modeling available, bookstores try to maximize shelf space for saleable products. The ever-increasing space given to manga and graphic novels means that the money they bring into stores is at least proportional to the amount of space dedicated to the product. While you can see that fact borne out in statistics, the reality of the growing shelf space speaks for itself.

At several conventions this year I was told that there was a growing fight over bookstore shelf space. While there is growth in shelf space in the bookstores, most of it is going to manga companies' output. Neither Marvel nor DC has products poised to fully take advantage of that shelf space, but that is changing.

DC has its CMX manga line, but it has run into editing troubles. One of its first series, *Tenjho Tenge* by Oh! Great, was heavily edited. Editing imported titles for the U.S. market has been a long tradition, but the new manga fans created out of the new manga boom did not understand that tradition. Worse: The fans who made noise at conventions and on Internet forums seemed to be composed entirely of that crowd. Now, while the edits were creator-approved, they still tried to drop an entire storyline, and, given the soap-opera nature of manga, many people were scratching their heads trying to figure out how CMX was going to excise a complete storyline from the series. Since then, CMX has announced that it's going to stick to titles that would not require editing. And CMX, despite having a goal of bringing manga fans to the rest of DC titles, hasn't been able to do that so far.

(Could there be something of a jinx on Oh! Great's works? Del Rey Manga is importing his other major title, *Airgear*. Del Rey had had a positive response from those opposed to expurgation, since it seemed to focus on appropriate labeling, rather than amending contents. However, it put a pair of pants on a character in *Airgear* rather than leave her in a thong. The UK version of the title had the original image, so, supposedly, there is an underground railroad of "thonged" copies coming to America.)

(And how often do I get to write about "thonged copies"?)

But now DC has is using a different strategy in taking some of that shelf space away from manga companies. Its teen-girl-focused original graphic novel line called MINX is created by Americans. On a couple of online forums, creators have said that they were first approached about working on this line more than two years ago, so, while MINX has been in the works for a long time, it seems to be coming to fruition just in time to start challenging for shelf space.

Marvel, on the other hand, seems focused on repackaging a select number of its titles in the manga-sized format, such as *Runaways*. It has several upcoming titles that will probably fit, such as *White Tiger* by popular young-adult author Tamora Pierce and the new *Dark Tower* series by Stephen King. But Marvel doesn't seem to be creating any titles

Del Rey put a pair of pants on a character in *Airgear* rather than leave her in a thong.

to directly target that manga shelf space.

Nevertheless, since one could argue that Marvel's overall strategy is creating comics in order to maintain and field-test concepts for films and other merchandising, its leaving that space unchallenged may not mean much.

The other major announcement about bookstore shelf space is the announcement that Books-A-Million, the third-largest book retailer in the country, was expanding its shelf space for manga, specifically mature titles, such as *yaoi* (manga focusing on homosexual male relationships). I did a basic introduction to *yaoi* last month, because I felt that I had to take nothing for granted about what people knew or didn't know. However, the very fact that a major bookstore chain is going to display adult material has to represent a sea change of some sort.

Several companies are publishing *yaoi*, and some are also releasing other adult material, but how will U.S. comics publishers share that shelf space? It is possible that Marvel's MAX line and DC's Vertigo line have titles that should be given specific space there, but most of those titles are already on bookshelves. But is this even a market that the Big Two *want*?

Readers who are into indy and alternative titles that focus on relationship and gender issues may find interesting series in these new manga sections.

So what publishers produce adult manga? Three come to mind, though they're not the only ones.

Icarus Comics seems to be currently the leader, with its biweekly anthology *Comics AG* having generated enough material that it's started aggressively releasing collections relying entirely on licensed material. Fantagraphics' Eros Comix imprint was one of the earliest publishers of adult manga and has a wide catalog from a variety of sources throughout the world, although it does not seem to have translated much manga recently. Radio Comix is one of the U,S, publishers that works almost exclusively with U.S. creators who have been inspired by manga.

Yuri is the female equivalent of *yaoi*, so it also focuses on relationships. From what I have seen, the more hardcore titles have yet to come to America, since just two U.S. publishers are focusing on them. Seven Seas has started to launch *yuri* titles, first with the upcoming title *Kashimashi — Girl Meets Girl* and the popular *Strawberry Panic!* series, licensed from Japan. The other publisher is ALC Publishing, which started as part of an organization that ran the first *yuri* convention in the US and offers both translated and original works. I haven't read ALC's material, but I have read *Kashimashi* and enjoyed it, especially considering the unusual nature of its love triangle.

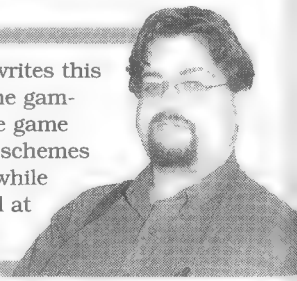
Finally, there are the *yaoi* companies, and there are a lot of them — with more being formed all the time, since the genre is selling so well. 801 Media is the newest of the companies, and none of its titles will ship until March 2007, but for the moment it seems that its entire output is licensed material. Blu Manga, June, and Be Beautiful each are licensed *yaoi* imprints for TokyoPop, DMP, and CPM Manga, respectively. Iris Print and Yaoi Press feature predominantly new original material, while DramaQueen also releases original material but is mostly licensed.

This is anything but an extensive list, and how "adult" the titles are varies from company to company. But being racked together will give those titles an advantage — one that could spread, if other retailers decide the Books-A-Million experiment is a success.

What does this all mean? Readers who are into indy and alternative titles that focus on relationship and gender issues may find interesting series in these new manga sections.

For the rest, the battle for shelf space seems to have settled into something of a war, with manga having the home base of bookstores and comics having comics shops, with colonies in each other's homelands. Finally, there's hope in the conflict for an eventual peaceful coexistence in the bookstores, thanks to the expanding shelf space.

BILL AGUIAR not only writes this column and others for the gaming industry, he runs the game company The CaBil and schemes how to use his new MA while not sleeping. Contact Bill at *CaBil@aol.com*.



Shadow Star Vol. 7
Dark Horse
$15.95, b/w, 232 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Mohiro Kitoh
reviewed by **Oliver Chin** ★★★½

As certain Japanese teens have emotionally connected with Shadow Dragons (powerful symbiotic extraterrestrials), school may seem a refuge for those who aren't affiliated with "dragon bearers" who rebel against the government. However, it isn't for Hiroko, who is bullied by girls jealous of her good grades. Meanwhile, her classmate Akira cannot escape the trauma caused by her abusive father. Their only commonality is their friendship with Shiina, who's been empowered by her relationship with the starfish-shaped dragon named Hoshi.

Both girls' fate may improve, since they have protective male admirers. However, once Hiroko cracks under the pressure from the gang and her unsympathetic dad, her inner dragon seeks revenge on the bad girls as well as Shiina, whose father becomes an endangered hostage in the process.

Mohiro Kitoh's delicate penmanship produces lithe waifs and antiseptic environments that belie the extreme damage perpetrated by his characters. Therefore, the shocking violence is as disturbing to the reader as to the unsuspecting victims. This installment picks up the pace, raises the stakes, and compounds fans' anticipation.

www.darkhorse.com
ISBN: 1-59307-363-1

Sengoku Nights #1
Tokyopop
$9.99, b/w, 200 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Kei Kusunoki, Kaoru Ohashi
reviewed by **Oliver Chin** ★★½

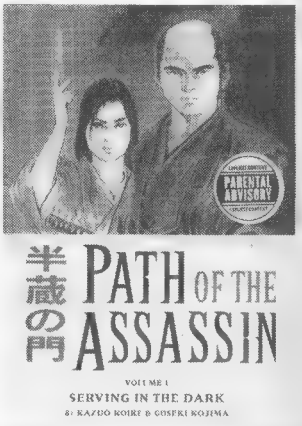
Teen Masayoshi has more than hormones on his mind: Once his parents sell their ancestral land, he's begun having a living nightmare that he is actually a feudal princess named Oni-hime. Long ago, she made a Faustian bargain for power. But her plans went awry as she killed thousands of people whose spirits are now being unsealed and seek to curse Masayoshi in her stead.

Plagued with seeing dead people, the boy is fortunately protected by the demon Nozuchi no Mikoto. He originally signed Oni-hime to the contract and still hungers for more fresh souls, such as Masayoshi's fantasy-loving girlfriend Yoshino. Aided by the exorcist Mizuki, can a boy deal with his demonic protector, female past, and painful memory?

The creators are a sister act who twist the common resurrection theme through a gender-bending lens. This shojo story is well-drawn and reminiscent of such historical series as *Fushigi Yugi*. But ultimately there is a lot of set-up for readers to digest for just a two-volume manga.

www.tokyopop.com
ISBN: 1-59532-945-5

Path of the Assassin Vols. 1-2
Dark Horse
$9.95@, b/w, 310 pgs.@, available now
Writer: Kazuo Koiki; Artist: Gozeki Kojima
reviewed by **George Hagenauer** ★★★★



Lone Wolf and Cub and *Samurai Executioner*, by Kazuo Koike and Gozeki Kojima, while conceived as long graphic novels, were really delivered as a string of stories linked by a core of characters. Both of those series could often be read out of order and still be understood. *Path of the Assassin* follows a far more linear structure and seems designed as one massive 15-book (about 7500+ pages) historical epic. While it's still structured in chapters, each builds on the one prior to it. As a result, this is best read from the beginning.

The core story is about master ninja Hattori Hanzo and his relationship with the one he is assigned to protect: Matsudaira Jiro Saburo Motonobu, who will become the shogun who unites Japan. The story begins when Hanzo is 15 and Motonobu is 16. They first meet while Motonubu is kept hostage by another clan. By the end of Book 2, Motonobu has won his first battle and is entering manhood.

This is a slower, less violent series: a complex court drama with many characters plotting against each other. The type of action Kojima is noted for occurs but in smaller doses than the preceding series. The rich historic detail of the prior series is also there, made even richer by the fact that many of the characters are based on real historic figures. The weakness lies in some of the characterizations. Hanzo rapes a woman in the first volume who instantly falls in love with him and offers to become his wife. The pudgy Motonobu is almost too much a caricature of a weak, pampered aristocrat. The shifting of characters and the fact that many have multiple names also often makes this difficult to read.

Path is still worth the effort, with excellent art by Kojima. It is interesting watching Koike work on a continuing story of this scope.

www.darkhorse.com
ISBN-10: 1-59307-502-2 (Vol. 1); 1-59307-503-0 (Vol. 2)
ISBN-13: 978-1-59307-502-6 (Vol. 1); 978-1-59307-503-3 (Vol. 2)

Yeah, I know my name appears at the top of this page three times. And yours doesn't.

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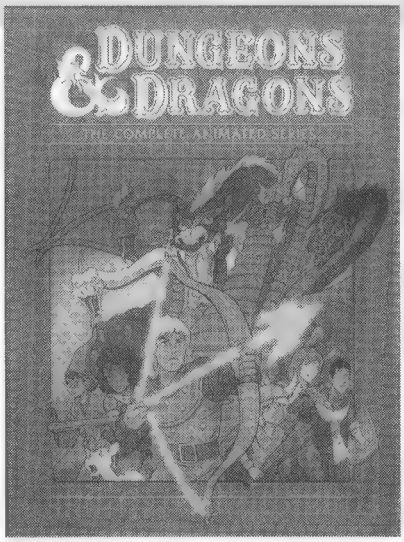

At long last, the classic '80s cartoon is legally available on DVD. *Dungeons & Dragons* has made its rounds on the bootleg circuit for years now, but none of those versions can compare to the marvelous job done in the production of this set.

While the cartoon doesn't exactly capture the flavor of the game it's named after, it contains lots of derring-do action, entertaining writing, and — as pointed out in the fun-facts segments — just a bit of the subversive. Besides, *D&D* creator Gary Gygax was involved with the show's production and writing, so how *un*-gamer-appealing can it be?

For comics fans: Veteran writers Mark Evanier and Paul Dini each wrote a pair of episodes, and Buzz Dixon and Steve Gerber wrote one episode apiece.

Those who grew up watching the show on Saturday mornings on CBS between '83 and '86 — or in recent years on Fox — remember how enjoyable it was. Cheesy? Yes. Typical dialogue overexplanation of everything? You betcha. But the impressive imagination that regularly cropped up was undeniably different from the standard fare of kids' cartoons. Also, while Dungeon Master — especially his name — was more than a little annoying (and creepy), his presence helped teach valuable lessons to the viewers. Good stuff for all ages. Seeing it here, in remastered video and audio sharpness, sends a happy tingle up the spine.

The extras on this set are to drool for. Coolest of all: The legendary never-produced final episode appears as a radio program (with an almost all-new voice cast), and that's as close as it's going to get to actually seeing it aired. By the way, be sure to read "Uni's Fun Facts." There are such surprises as: One episode used a piece of music from CBS's nighttime show *The Incredible Hulk*; in another, Eric the Cavalier fans himself with a Spider-Man comic book; and, in the two-fer bin, in the episode "Quest of the Skeleton Warrior," the artists put a bit too much detail on Diana the Acrobat and another sequence shows the face of Hank the Ranger melting in surprisingly graphic detail. Those are just samplings of the fun. There are also episode commentaries, storyboards, a documentary, and more.

The packaging alone warrants the four-star rating. It's designed in the style of D&D role-playing game sets, and inside it there's a hardcover supplement for the RPG that contains character stats, info, and a real adventure to segue between the cartoon and the RPG. There's also a detailed episode guide.

The downsides are minor. Most notable is the text on "Uni's Fun Facts" — tiny and not enough contrast between it and the background, making it hard to read, unless you're up close, even if you have a large screen. Other than that, there's the occasional whoopsie, such as the episode guide listing the final episode from Disc Two at the beginning of Disc Three. As I said, minor.

Yes, at $55, this isn't a cheap set. But once you *see* it and watch the cartoons, it's clear that it's worth every cent.

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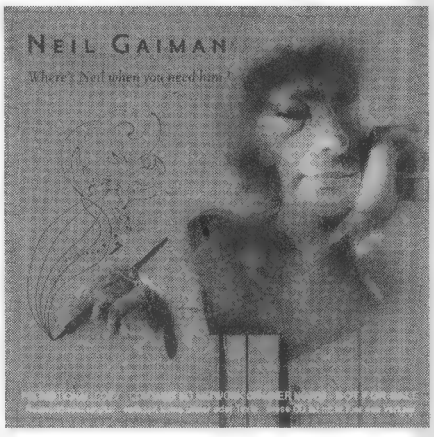
★★½



Contrary to what the title indicates, this is not music by Neil Gaiman. Rather, the 17 tracks on this CD are songs inspired by his works. Gaiman provided liner notes, and longtime Gaiman associate Dave McKean provided several pieces of art — including the cover — exclusively for this project.

Much like Gaiman's work, this music will appeal most to the alternative rock crowd with a strong lean toward Goth. The music is good, though in most cases not gripping, but a few songs excel. Among the better ones are "Raven Star" by Lunascape, "We Won't Go" by Hungry Lucy, and especially "The Cold Black Key" by Azam Ali — whose voice and music sounds so much like (Friend of Gaiman) Tori Amos, it's scary. Amos also has a song on the CD, the concluding track, "Sister Named Desire (Remastered Version)," though it doesn't impress nearly as much as some of her other work.

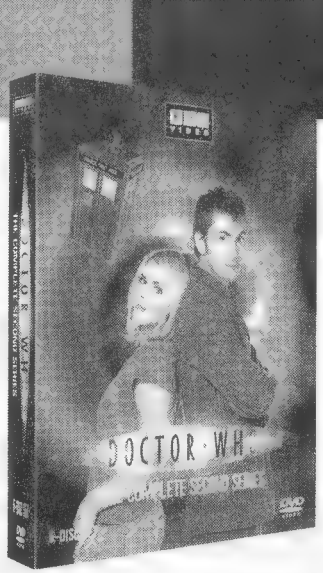
It's also odd that tracks #1 and #7 share the same name, "Coraline" (the title of one of Gaiman's children's books), but it's a minor thing.

Gaiman fans and those who favor the darker rock music milieu will welcome this disc.

www.dancing-ferret.com

Doctor Who: The Complete Second Series
BBC Video/Warner Home Video

$99.98, color, widescreen, 10 hrs., 45 min., 6 discs, available Jan. 16
Starring David Tennant as The Doctor and Billie Piper as Rose Tyler
reviewed by special non-Ray persona: **Maggie Thompson** ★★★★

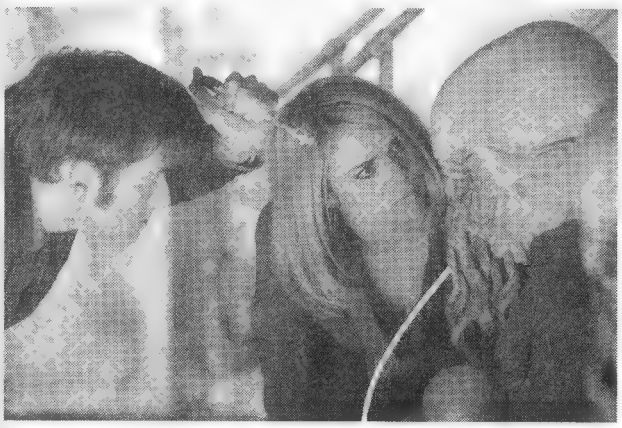


Russell T Davies (pronounced "Davis") took many SF fans by surprise, when he brought the *Doctor Who* series back to TV screens worldwide in 2005 (well, to *U.S.* TV screens in 2006). The producer-writer moved a classic series to delicious new levels while remaining true to the premise that first aired in England in 1963.

While Christopher Eccleston's Doctor blew away viewers old and new (keeping in mind that the series — the longest-running science-fiction show of all time — has always aimed primarily at an audience of children), he left the series at the end of Season One. Now, it's David Tennant's turn to travel through time and space in 10 stories (and a total of 13 episodes). He's joined by Season One's Companion Rose Tyler and a host of other characters, both new (the Ood, below) and old (oh, I'm *not* going to specify).

The stories themselves will have run on U.S. TV's Sci-Fi Channel by the time the set is released, but the discs are packed with bonuses that aren't to be missed. One episode per disc has, not only a commentary — but a *picture-in-picture* commentary. Some are especially affecting, with Sophia Myles brushing away tears at the end of "The Girl in the Fireplace" and Tennant and Piper occasionally speechless during "Doomsday."

The bonus disc has cut-down versions of the *Doctor Who Confidential* documentaries that accompanied the original BBC broadcasts. Nevertheless, the set's prize "behind-the-scenes" material appears in "David Tennant's Video Diaries," which appeared somewhere uncredited (online?) but are collected here as a special delight, recorded by the actor as early as before the first readthrough. Fans will find themselves shivering in sympathy, as they watch the film crews in gloves and parkas recording performers in summery garb for the sake of the story. Cold. The U.K. is *cold*. Brrr!



Science-fiction fans may quibble here and there with regard to an episode's plot device or even a major plot development. But even the least of the episodes have captivating moments and thought-provoking concepts. And there are more than a few episodes that'll knock the proverbial socks off the viewer — with many emotional bonuses for fans for whom many of the references will strike notes of pleasant remembrance. Or recollected horrors. And there are major turning points for the series itself. The stories are wonderful blends of sophisticated concept, sparkling dialogue, brilliant performances, and perfectly supportive special effects and sound. Don't miss it.

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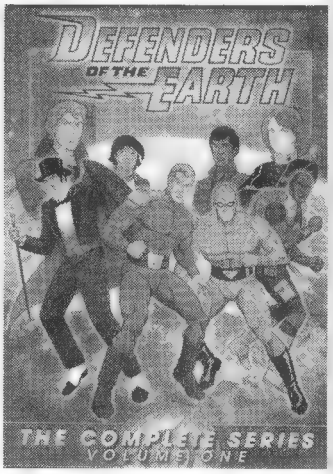


This set, comprising the first half of the series created by Marvel Comics under license from King Features Syndicate, is a true child of the era in which it was created: the mid-'80s. The animated adventures of the team, featuring Flash Gordon, The Phantom, Mandrake the Magician, Lothar, and a handful of younger hero-wannabes, has lots of Saturday-morning action-cartoon derring-do, which makes for decent entertainment but not much else.

The theme song reeks of '80s rock music influence (which is to say, "Bleah"), and the macho factor is so cranked in both the theme and the show that it seems apparent the creators had not even a remote interest in attracting girls into the fandom fold.

The art is on a par with other cartoons of this variety (which is to say, "OK"), and the dialogue is similarly encumbered with the typical whack-you-over-the-head direction.

The only error is that the set is supposed to have a bonus episode of the animated show *Flash Gordon* on disc five, but it's nowhere to be found.

Pre-teen kids probably will enjoy this, though older kids and most adults likely will want to pass.

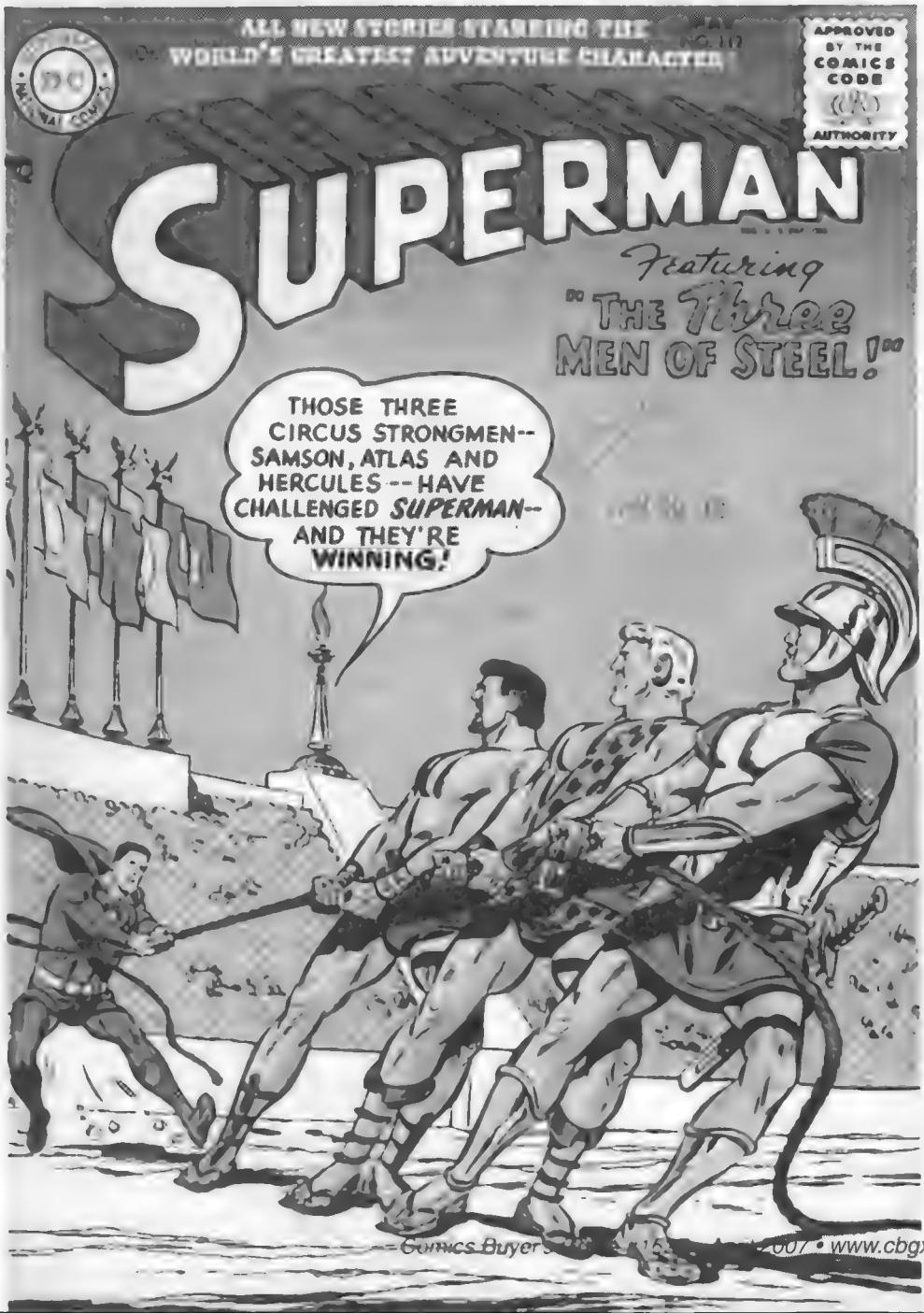
www.inkandpaintdvd.com

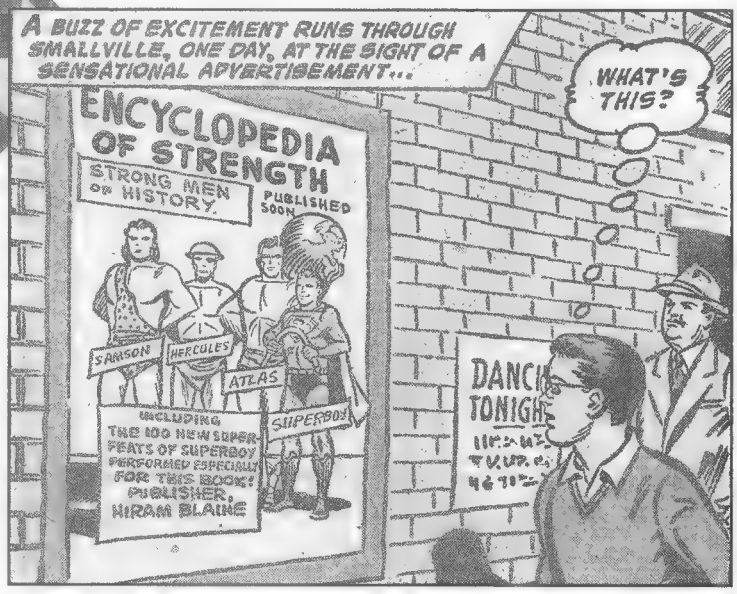
Hercules, Samson, and Atlas loved hanging out with (and annoying) Big Blue

Superman's legendary pals

by **CRAIG SHUTT**

Samson, Atlas, and Hercules kept visiting The Man of Steel, sometimes to help out and sometimes not so much.





The Boy of Steel often found himself compared to DC's favorite three strongmen, as seen in *Superboy* #58.

Dear Mr. Silver Age:

When Samson and Atlas showed up in ***All-Star Superman*** *#2, the issue that also featured Super-Lois, they seemed to know The Man of Steel and Lois pretty well. Have they met before?*

Shazam T.W.
Rock of Eternity

I can't speak for their relationship or history on Earth-All-Star beyond what we saw in that sparkling issue, Shaz. But back in the day on Earth-1, Superman had recurring visits from those two and another legendary hero, Hercules (who, coincidentally, was recently seen visiting Wonder Woman). Although, just as we saw in that *All-Star* issue, their friendship with Superman kind of waxed and waned.

No doubt those fluctuations resulted in part because those three legendary guys considered themselves to be the bee's knees and the idols of many, especially many women. And Silver Age Supes on occasion had a bit of a rocky relationship with super-guys who liked to show off or (especially) steal his girl. And those three, particularly Hercules, were inclined to such antics. So, while I wouldn't go so far as to classify this as a love-hate relationship, it would definitely fall into the respect-irritate category. Fortunately for The Man of Steel, he had more than super-strength going for him, including being a tricky cuss.

Comparing Kal-El to these three legendary strong men was a natural, at least during the Silver Age, at least for Mort Weisinger, editor of the Superman family comics, who always called on those three when he needed a legendary strong man. One of the beautiful things about the Silver Age was that these guys weren't just legendary; they all were flesh-and-blood characters out of "history" who could meet up with The Man of Steel just by shooting through time. So none of them had to worry that someone would stop them on the street to say, "Hey, aren't you mythical?" But let's not think too hard about what it means for Earth-1's past, if a guy like Hercules was a historical figure.

The comparison to our super-trio started early in Supes' Silver Age career, all the way back in Smallville. (And, in discussing Kal's visits from these guys, we're going to assume that every visit they made to Superboy, even if that issue was printed in 1964, took place before they met Superman, even if we read those adventures in 1957, since every Superboy story took place before any Superman story, if you see what I mean and I'm sure you do.)

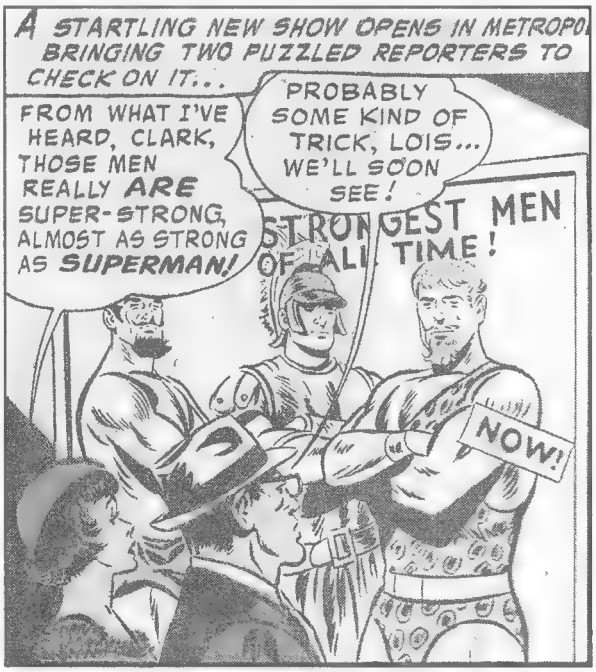
Hercules and Samson prepare to don their secret identities of stablehand Tarkus and court-jester Merrio in *Adventure Comics* #257.

The Boy of Steel got a glimmer of this natural comparison in "The 100 New Feats of Superboy" in *Superboy* #58 (Jul 57). In the story's first panel, he saw a poster promoting a new "Encyclopedia of Strength" that featured images of Samson, Hercules, Atlas,

When Lana turned evil in *Superboy* #110, she called on The Titanic Trio to fulfill her cunning plan to embarrass our hero.

and his own self. That was the only mention of the three others, however, as the story went on to show Superboy getting roped into doing the aforementioned feats promoted in the book. (He agreed after the publisher, looking for a way out of having jumped the gun, agreed to split the profits with Superboy's favorite charity. Sometimes, the things that Kal would do in exchange for a nominal donation to charity were stupefying.)

Clark may have had a feeling of *déjà vu* as he looked at a poster of his favorite strong men from throughout history in *Superman* #112.



Our hero got more than a quick glimpse the next time some of these guys showed up to bedevil him, in "The First Two Super-Men!" in *Adventure Comics* #257 (Feb 59). In this case, the referenced two were Hercules and Samson. Atlas, sad to say, was the third wheel in this troika, making far fewer appearances than the others. (Hercules, for those scoring at home, showed up the most, including several solo visits.)

Atlas' paucity of appearances may have been due to his being a god, whereas the other two were human (OK, half-human in Hercules' case). Atlas also was probably the least well known to the audience. It also made more sense that Lois and Lana could be wooed and won by super-strong guys rather than an Olympic god, although using "sense" in a sentence where we're discussing any decisions made by the two LL women about their choices in men can't be done easily. But I digress.

In the aforementioned issue, the two sorta-human super-men attracted Clark Kent's attention by showing off at a local carnival. Shocked to discover they really *were* as strong as they appeared, Clark as Superboy confronted them after their act. They admitted they'd joined the circus to draw out The Boy of Steel, because they needed some of the elixir that made him invulnerable. They thought he was being selfish when he tried to explain that it didn't work that way.

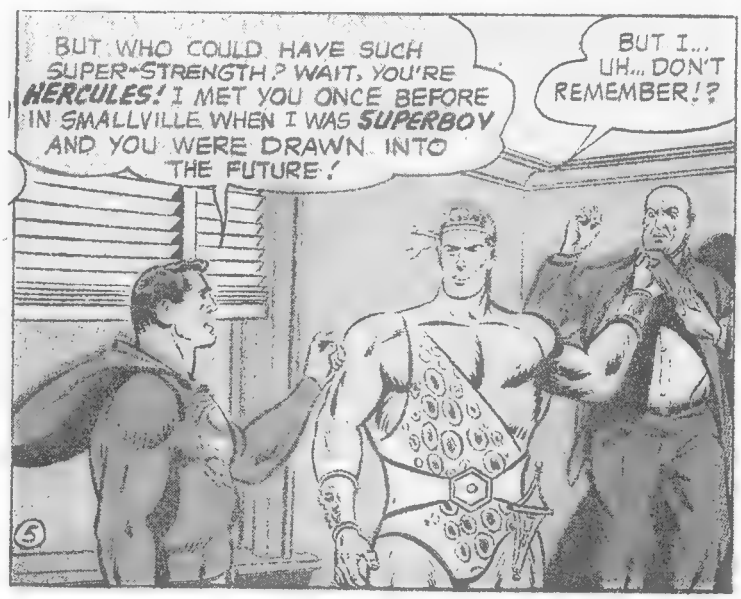
When their spying finally convinced them he was telling the truth, they instead blackmailed him (having learned his secret identity) into returning to the past with them. A great seer had sent them to gain Superboy's powers so they could defeat an evil king, who had hired the strong duo to guard his jewels in a cave. Instead, they'd given all the jewels away, and the king was tired of hearing their excuses for not allowing him access to the treasure.

Upon arrival in the past, the strong men assumed their secret identities: Hercules became Tarkus, a humble stablehand, while Samson donned the guise of Merrio, the king's court jester. "Great guns!" Clark thought. "Our history books never told of this!" I can't imagine why. The notion of how these two came to live not only in the same time but also in the same city wasn't exactly addressed, so we'll just keep moving. Needless to say, Superboy helped the two strongmen come out on top.

The Boy of Steel didn't exactly meet the legendary trio the next time they showed up, in "The Surrender of Superboy!" in *Superboy* #110 (Jan 64). But they managed to do him wrong just the same. The source of this antagonism was Clark's next-door neighbor

and full-time pest, Lana Lang. While unpacking goodies from an expedition with her father, Lana managed to come into contact with a tropical plant that made her hate the next person she saw (what a coincidence, it was Superboy) and then she found a mask that allowed the wearer to raise ghosts from the past. What a bad combination!

She began calling up a slew of characters from the past, including Sir Galahad, Merlin, Sherlock Holmes, Venus, Helen of Troy, and Juliet Capulet. Earth-1 certainly had an interesting past, didn't it? Along the way, she called up our three pals, Hercules, Samson, and Atlas, to perform super-strong vandalism that would be blamed on the boy she currently loved to hate. With the help of Daddy Lang, Superboy straightened things (and Lana) out, although he never did learn who was responsible for the super-problems that were blamed on him. When he looked back on it later in life, I'm betting he had a good guess.



One of the Big Three again played a role in The Boy of Steel's life, again without actually showing up, in "The Samson of Smallville!" in *Superboy* #139 (Jun 67). You've probably guessed which one it was. Clark's class was visiting a museum that had an exhibit of "Famous Hairpieces of History," which included a lock of Samson's hair. Sadly, the collection also had been placed under a curse by an Indian medicine man, who had had one of his scalps stolen for the display. The curse meant that touching the hair supplied that person's attributes, which mostly weren't good (spy, traitor, murderer, *etc.*).

When the roof picked that moment to collapse, Clark saved the class but had no explanation for his sudden strength. So he pretended that Samson's lock of hair had touched him. After an exhilarating array of adventures in which he could freely use his super-strength around town, Clark became tired of everyone knowing where to go when they needed help. So he arranged to "lose" his power, and things returned to normal. So, as often was the case whether they actually showed up or not, one of the super-trio did Supes a mighty favor but ended up being more trouble than had been anticipated.

The three strong men really picked up the pace of their visits, when Clark grew up and moved to Metropolis. Their first mention came in "The Three Men of Steel!" in *Superman* #112 (Mar 57). Coincidentally, this appearance combined the first two notices that Superboy had received of the three. The first panel showed Superman looking at the three men on a poster (as The Boy of Steel had done in *Superboy* #58), while the second panel showed Clark watching a performance by the three (as young Kal did in *Adventure* #257) and confirming that their performance was bona fide.

In this case, however, the three men were merely using the strong men's names. A shady scientist had given them super-strength in exchange for huge heaping wads of money. But Superman learned that the

Did Lois dream about Samson in *Lois Lane* #19 — including his secret identity of Merrio from *Adventure* #257?

In *Action* #267, Superman reminded Hercules that they'd met before, after Luthor's plan to use The Son of Zeus fell apart.

Superman's friendship with Hercules took a turn for the worse in *Action* #268, when Herc tried to win Lois' love by putting the kibosh on Supes.

powers weren't permanent and he feared the three would lose their strength at a bad time, killing them. Even more unfortunately, snoopy Lois tracked down the scientist and gave herself powers, too. (She only gained super-strength, so she didn't qualify for our listing of "Super-Lois" adventures in ***CBG*** #1618, but it was close enough that we should have included a mention of this tale. My bad.)

After a few pages of letting Lois show off, Superman and his main squeeze hunted down the three strong men and saved them from killing themselves. Supes also saved Lois, when her strength gave out, and The Man of Steel used his incredible powers to track down the scientist and bring him to justice. Yay for the good guys.

The next appearance again was a solo tale and it again involved only Samson, in a story that can only make you scratch your head and wonder. (Unless you're familiar with Silver Age Super-Family stories, in which case your brain likely knew enough to go on vacation when you picked up the issue.)

In *Lois Lane* #19 (Aug 60), our plucky reporter succumbed to the overpowering scent of some flowers and collapsed. This occurred just shortly after she and the rest of the staff of *The Daily Planet* had rehearsed a skit wearing ancient Roman costumes. (The amount that *The Planet* could accomplish with only one editor and three reporters could be stupefying at times.)

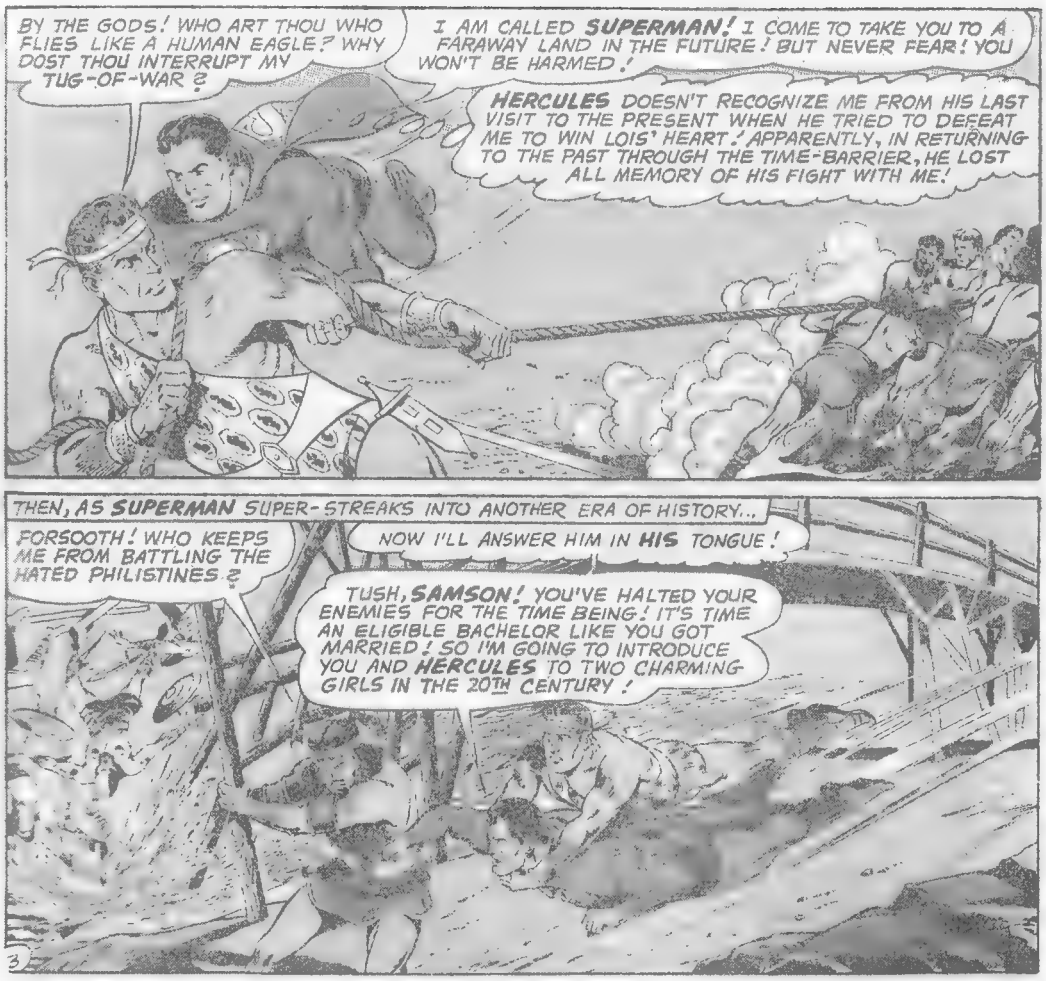
When Lo awoke, she discovered she'd been transported 2,000 years into the past and all the way to ancient Rome. She also realized she could understand Latin perfectly. Those were some darn fragrant flowers! In Rome, she met Samson, who was living at the time of the Caesars and fighting the evil emperor. Sure, why not? She also met Merrio, Caesar's "court jester," whom she suspected of secretly being Samson.

Loyal Super-Family readers (and the few of you paying attention here) knew that her suspicions were correct. First, our gal Lo is one darned insightful reporter, so we know to trust her instincts, and, second, this was the same secret identity that Samson had donned back in *Adventure* #257, when Superboy helped him. Holy intense continuity! In fact, this adherence to a wacky bit of business from 1½ years earlier caused more problems than it solved. Not only did this Samson/Merrio live in a considerably different time than Superboy's past pal, but how the heck did Lois dream up the notion that Samson had the exact secret identity that he actually *had* had in the past?

We'll never know the answer, because, just as Lois was resigning herself to never being able to return to the present and agreeing to (of course) marry Samson, she returned to the present. The *Planet* staff laughed off her recollection of her adventures, and she was left wondering if she had dreamed the whole thing. Oddly, she didn't find a stray lock of hair in her pocket to give us that final twist these stories so enjoyed. But Superboy fans no doubt were pounding down the aspirin to make the pain go away.

That same month, one of Samson's pals made his longest visit to Superman in the two-part clash of the titans that began with "Hercules in the 20th Century!" in *Action Comics* #267 (Aug 60). Just to be sure they all got their due, the opening caption explained, "Out of the dim past, have come the renowned names of super-strong heroes ... Atlas, Samson, Goliath, and others! But mightier than all of them was another super-muscled 'Superman' who existed long ago ..." Until that "existed" part, there was no argument, since all those "renowned names" do come to us from the dim past. Although Atlas probably also took exception to that "mightier than all" part.

This was also one of the few mentions of Goliath, since he was more noted for his height than his power. (He'd been taken



Superman had to travel to two time periods to pick up Hercules and Samson to woo Lois and Lana in *Action* #279.

down by a shrimp, after all.) But he was not completely forgotten, as we'll see in just a bit.

This time, Luthor managed to draw Hercules to the present using his MacGyver-like ability to combine odd prison accoutrements into phenomenal scientific devices. Aspirin and a shaving mirror were the key ingredients for his time ray. He simply focused the ray on a picture of Hercules, and the big galoot appeared in his cell. I wonder if he's got any of that aspirin left over?

Herc was tricked into thinking Lex had been falsely imprisoned, so he freed him and they began a reign of crime (to regain Lex's "stolen" gold). When Superman confronted the criminal duo, Luthor intended to stop The Man of Steel with a big hunk of kryptonite, but Hercules realized he'd been tricked and saved Superman.

Once again injecting the oddest bit of continuity, Superman mentioned that he'd met Herc back when he was Superboy, but Hercules professed no knowledge of the encounter. Superman decided that crossing the time barrier had wiped his memory, which sadly will not be our fate, when it comes to these odd continuity references.

Hercules asked to be allowed to hang around the 20th century for a while, and Supes agreed. The Last Son of Krypton scrounged up some civilian duds for The Son of Zeus and set him up in an apartment. Strangest of all, he decided to get Herc employment, so he recommended him for a reporter's job at *The Planet*! Yikes!

As you no doubt guessed, Lois soon was palling around with Herc, who quickly revealed his identity, when Miss Lane started gushing about Superman. Lois, of course, immediately accepted that this was the ancient Hercules, thereby saving us time.

Amazingly, Lois rejected Hercules' advances, listing the variety of powers Superman had that Herc couldn't match. Embittered, Hercules called up his own super-family, including Vulcan, Venus, Mercury, and Achilles. They all passed along to him a bit of their powers and some of their weapons. With those advantages, Herc returned to Metropolis to battle Superman for Lois' purported love.

In the next issue, Hercules began his battle with Superman, despite Lois' protests

When three strong men were needed to show off the super-strength of wrestler Antonino Rocca in *Superman* #155, guess who got the call?

Superman met a parallel world's version of Hercules in *Action* #308 and had to help him out of a jam, too.

that she wasn't going to marry Herc under any circumstances. The Son of Zeus used his powers and weapons anyway but, when even Cupid's arrows of love failed to win Lois' heart, he became desperate. He used the flute of Apollo, an instrument that Apollo was not especially known for being proficient at playing anywhere except on Earth-1, to put Superman to sleep for 100 years. Hercules then blackmailed Lois into agreeing to marry him by offering to revive Superman in return.

Finding a way to plight my troth to a truly ticked-off Lois Lane isn't how I'd have used those powers and weapons, but Herc's plan almost worked. Fortunately, Jupiter (Herc's dad) sent Venus to tell Herc to knock if off. When he refused, she smote him upside his head and then awoke Supes to pound some sense into the big lug.

Superman finally flew Hercules into the past, where he immediately lost his memory of his trip. Rather than just leaving (so Superboy could meet him later for the first time), Supes mentioned who he was and was satisfied when Herc gave him a dumb look (although it was about the only kind he had).

Like a bad penny, Hercules turned up again with his best buddy in "The Super-Rivals" in *Action* #279 (Aug 61), when he and Samson wooed Lois and Lana, respectively. In another bizarre bit of continuity, the story was billed as an Imaginary Story, "which could or could not happen." Given the bizarre ways these legendary boys got together in "real" stories (if you know what I mean), I don't see why this one couldn't happen. In fact, once again, even in this Imaginary Tale, a bit of oddball continuity was thrown in. Mort must've really enjoyed digging out these stories for a rereading.

Our Imaginary Tale began with Lois and Lana discussing the probability that they'd marry Hercules and Samson, if they were around. Superman, seeing his two girlfriends chatting, eavesdropped on the conversation in that creepy, super-stalking way he had that apparently appealed to these gals. Also in that patronizing way he had, he decided to teach them a lesson about desiring other super-strong guys instead of his own super-wonderful self.

To achieve that dubious goal, Supes flew back to ancient Greece and snatched up Hercules. The legendary hero didn't recognize The Man of Steel, and Superman reminded himself expositorily that Herc had forgotten their previous adventure when he tried to win Lois' heart. It was an obvious reference to *Action* #267 exactly one year earlier, but we didn't get a footnote to make sure we knew what Supes was referring to.

Superman then flew to "another era of history" to scoop up Samson (carrying Hercules on his back in the process). So, in some ways, this story was *way* less

Imaginary than some of those earlier ones that played even faster and looser with "history." Big Blue explained his plan to introduce the two heroes to two very eligible ladies and then used a super-apparatus to teach them English really fast. They, of course, quickly swept Lois and Lana right off their fickle feet. Hey, cut the ladies some slack; it was Imaginary!

Sadly, the marriage-license bureau required a one-week cooling-off ... err, I mean, waiting period. That gave our famed duo a chance to see what they'd gotten themselves into. What they discovered was that Lois and Lana made Katharina from Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* look like Miss Congeniality. Lois forced Herc to carry their dream house around on his back until she found a site she liked. Lana did likewise with Samson and then demanded a pet fit for a queen — but couldn't handle the mountain lion he brought her.

After many more indignities totally out of keeping with what little character Lois and Lana could ever summon up (It was Imaginary!), the heroes begged Superman to return them to their own times and get them away from these crazy ladies. Lana and Lois likewise said good riddance and went back to pulling each other's hair (literally) to keep each other away from The Beau of Steel. And Superman went back to pretending this bizarre behavior wasn't something he'd encouraged.

The long-haired Mighty Youth helped the red-headed Beatle in *Jimmy Olsen* #79, revealing himself to be one of our trio.

Hercules and Samson were back again exactly one year later, when they took part in "The Downfall of Superman!" in *Superman* #155 (Aug 62). During The Man of Steel's exhibition with famed wrestling star Antonino Rocca (a real wrestling personality), Mr. Mxyzptlk apparently showed up to humiliate our hero. Mxyzptlk apparently made Rocca stronger than Supes to allow him to mop the floor with Big Blue and then apparently materialized our two titanic pals from the past for Rocca to beat.

Those "apparently" terms that I liberally sprinkled are an indication to shrewd readers that, while this was not an Imaginary Story, it was not exactly a real Mxy appearance either. And, since nobody fell asleep early on, it doesn't fall into the "dream" category. No, it was all a way-overcomplicated hoax involving Krypto, Lightning Man, and Cosmic Man, concocted by our crafty Super-Guy to trick a few hoods into revealing where they'd hidden their loot. Dressing up adult Legionnaires as Hercules and Samson was an inspired touch and it no doubt was Supes' way at giving the needle to his legendary pals. He can be such a vindictive guy.

Clark called on his three legendary buddies in *Action* #320 but got evil parallel-world versions instead. Hey, it happens.

The Man of Steel took a break from his historical pals for a while, but that just gave him a chance to check in with a Hercules from a parallel world. In "Superman Meets the Goliath-Hercules!" in *Action* #308 (Jan 64), our legendary buddy turned out to actually be a really tall guy from a parallel planet. While on an archeological expedition with Lana and her father, Clark ended up traveling into the past and meeting this

In *Action* #353, Superman received help from his Titanic buddy Atlas in his battle with Zha-Vam — who could only call on the help of Hercules in return.

Goliath-sized Hercules, who was defeated in battle by the shrimpy Jason *cum* David. When Ben-Hur showed up, Supes deduced he had traveled into another dimension, although it had to be difficult to be certain, given Earth-1's wacky concept of a historical timeline.

This Hercules was susceptible to red kryptonite, an interesting concept, if only because it meant this dimension had a blown-up Krypton that *also* should have burped out a rocket with a boy named Kal. We didn't meet him, but we did get to watch our own Kryptonian have many mythical adventures before being flung back to his own world. The final caption promised us more adventures of Superman in this parallel world, but, if they followed, I mercifully forgot them while traveling through the dimensional portal.

In a switch on Superboy meeting the grown-up heroes, Superman met a youthful one a few months after that parallel-world adventure. It occurred in *Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen* #79 (Sep 64). The meeting happened after said pal became "The Red-Headed Beatle of 1,000 B.C.," possibly the oddest combination ever of DC's injection of pop culture and wacky history into its stories (but I wouldn't want to hold a contest). Basically, while rocking out to the Beatles in his apartment, as he was wearing his orange Beatle wig, Jim was hijacked into the past in a time bubble. You could only write that sentence about DC's Silver Age, baby!

Upon arriving 3,000 years in the past, Jim was saved from the villain by a young peasant boy. He declined to reveal his real identity, going by the code name Mighty Youth. Needing to acclimate Jim to the time in which he was now stranded, Mighty Youth took the Jimster to his secret headquarters, and Jim began earning a living in his new time. Shepherding did not appeal to his capitalistic mindset, so he became the titular creature. In the process, he put together the evidence and discovered that his strong pal was really a young Samson.

Superman ultimately showed up to save Jim, pulling down the city wall by standing between two support columns and pushing them over. (Irony alert!). Jim introduced his super-pal to his ancient pal, and we once again got one of those wacky bits of continuity that they liked to inject.

As the adult Superman shook hands with the young Samson, The Man of Steel noted to himself that he'd already met the adult Samson, back when he was the young Superboy. I just love time-travel stories. This time, we did get a footnote to that earlier tale in *Adventure* #257, although we got no explanation for why Samson didn't remember this early meeting with a guy with a big S on his chest when he later met Superboy as an adult. He was in his own time, so he didn't have that time-traveling memory loss-thing hurting him this time.

Superman sort of called on his three semi-buddies one more time in "The Three Super-Enemies!" in *Action* #320 (Jan 65). Trapped in an underground bomb shelter with Lois and Jimmy during a massive plan to rob Metropolis' banks, Clark created a cunning plan. Apparently having stronger aspirin than Lex had had for his own time-traveling device, Superman managed to cobble together a gizmo that pulled Hercules, Atlas, and Samson to the present.

He convinced them to pretend to be his super-self and halt the robberies, with his guidance and his always helpful super-ventriloquism. There was only one problem with this plan: Superman had accidentally drawn the legendary strong men from a *parallel* world, apparently a different world from the one in which Hercules resembled

The Superman from Earth-All-Star apparently has the same long-term relationship with Samson and Atlas, as seen in *All-Star Superman* #3.

Goliath. D'oh! Sadly, the trio from this other world were, in The Man of Steel's words, "vicious" and "rather stupid."

Kandorians alerted Superman that he'd accidentally tapped into some evil counterparts (hey, it happens), and he tricked them into wanting to return to their own time voluntarily. No, it didn't involve siccing the marriage-minded Lois and Lana on these guys. That was Imaginary!

One of the super-pals came to Superman's rescue one last time during the Silver Age — which is only fair, since another of them was being used against him. The problems arose during the mega-battle against Zha-Vam, who'd gained the powers of the gods (Zeus, Hercules, Apollo, Vulcan, Achilles, and Mercury to start with, forming his name while combining the Greek and Roman pantheons). The battles began in *Action* #351 (Jun 67), in one of the best multi-part Superman adventures in the title. (It was named #2 in the legendary column from ***CBG*** #1527-1528, in which Mr. Silver Age counted down the best such stories.)

Finally, in #353, Superman decided to fight fire with fire and went into the past to Mount Olympus to gain the help of a few gods, too. Thus, as Zha whipped off his sandal to reveal his kryptonite Achilles heel (I just love this stuff), Superman touched the "A" on his new belt and called up Atlas to aid him. Atlas gave Zha-Vam a real beat-down ("After all, Hercules never lifted a world!" Zha remarked in a "How's that again?" moment, as he got pounded.) Between the two of them, Atlas and Superman took down the Hercules-empowered Zha-Vam.

It's fitting that Atlas finally made a solo appearance and provided the power that put Superman over the top. He made the fewest visits of these legendary heroes, but he definitely would be the one Superman would be most likely to welcome back, given their spotty history with The Man of Steel. Granted, some of those appearances involved dreams, Imaginary Stories, and parallel world doppelgängers. But, heck, that's only to be expected when you're a friend of Silver Age Superman. Or at least a legendary semi-friend.

Finding our friends

Want to spend time with Hercules, Samson, and Atlas but can't find their original appearances? Here is where the stories mentioned from these issues have also appeared:

Superboy #58 was reprinted in *Adventure* #329.

Adventure #257 and *Lois Lane* #19 were reprinted in *Superman Annual* #6.

Action #267-268 were reprinted in *Superman* #239 and *Showcase Presents: Superman* Vol. 2.

Action #279 and *Superman* #155 were reprinted in *Showcase Presents: Superman* Vol. 3.

All-Star Superman #3 is available at fine (and well-stocked) comics shops right now.

The rest have not been reprinted, but a number may soon be coming, if DC continues its aggressive Silver Age reprint program. What a great time to be a fan of Silver Age comics!

Mr. Silver Age's Mailchute ...

Daredevil and The Metal Men!

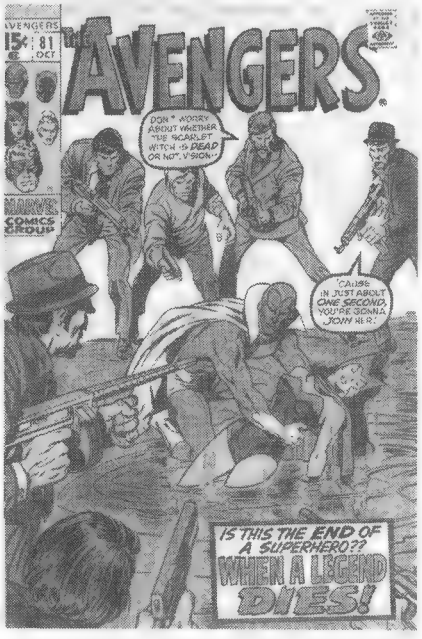
by **CRAIG SHUTT**

Did the events of *Avengers* #81, *Daredevil* #69, and *Avengers* #82 constitute a crossover by Mr. Silver Age's definition?

Dear Mr. Silver Age: In your Silver Age crossover column (***CBG*** #1617), there were some you missed involving Daredevil. First, there was (to me) the crossover that wasn't advertised as a crossover. It started in *Avengers* #80 (Sep 70) and #81 (Oct 70), went to *Daredevil* #69 (Oct 70), then back to *Avengers* #82 (Nov 70), with the issues involving schemes by the crime cartel Zodiac.

Next was *Iron Man* #35 (Mar 71), *Daredevil* #73 (Feb 71), and *Iron Man* #36 (Apr 71), with Iron Man, Daredevil, Nick Fury, and Madame Masque vs. Zodiac and Spymaster. The story continued from *Iron Man* #33-34 (Jan-Feb 71), and the cliffhanger from *Iron Man* #36 (Apr 71) concluded in *Iron Man* #37 (May 71), so Daredevil's involvement was in the middle of the story.

Then there was a two-part crossover between *Daredevil* #77 (Jun 71) and *Sub-Mariner* #40 (Aug 71). In *Daredevil* #77, Daredevil, Namor, and Spider-Man were involved in a three-way battle at the site of an extra-dimensional opening in Central Park. At the end of *Daredevil* #77, a woman named Tuvia appeared, took Spidey and Namor off to help her, and erased Daredevil's memory of what had happened (although he had some



Nameless showed how easy it was to rebuild a robot during her tragic return in *The Brave and the Bold* #187.

memory of it in *Daredevil Annual* #4, 1976). In *Sub-Mariner* #40, Spidey and Namor battled the evil Turalla, making this a crossover in which the title character in the first part of the story didn't appear in the second half.

Next was *Daredevil* #108 (Mar 74) and #109 (May 74), *Marvel Two-in-One* #3 (May 74), and *Daredevil* #110-#112 (Jun-Aug 74). This story continued in part from *Shanna the She-Devil* #4 (Jun 73) and #5 (Aug 73).

Finally, there was a crossover between *Daredevil* #138 (Oct 76) and *Ghost Rider* #20 (Oct 76), set up in *Ghost Rider* #17-#19 (Apr-Jun 76) and the last page of *Daredevil* #137 (Sep 76). What's notable here is both parts of the story were drawn by John Byrne.

I have one comment about the Challengers-Doom Patrol crossover. What you neglected to mention was that this story actually began on the last panel of *Doom Patrol* #101 (Feb 66), with The Challs contacting The Doom Patrol and asking for help.

Finally, regarding your Metal Men article (in ***CBG*** #1618), it was revealed in *The Brave and the Bold* that Platinum Man and Nameless had survived the deaths of the other Metal Mates (for want of a better name for them), but neither of them was ever mentioned again. I wonder if this was an Imaginary Story.

Bruce Bender
bbender060@aol.com

*(Your **Daredevil** list shows how complex the Marvel universe can make defining stories, Bruce. My rule of thumb is that, if one issue of a title leads directly into the next, then the story isn't a true crossover in which a reader needs to buy another title to finish the story. So **Daredevil** #69 and #77 wouldn't qualify — but the others probably do. I hadn't included the final one because it was well past my time frame. I'm guessing that, if we extend out to 1976, there are more crossovers and semi-crossovers to include with other heroes, too.*

*That Metal Men tale appeared in **The Brave and the Bold** #187 (Jun 82), when Batman helped Doc Magnus rebuild The Metal Men. Then, Nameless arrived to reveal she and Platinum Man had rebuilt each other, after she found where Doc's earlier counterpart team for the Men had been buried.*

Nameless and Tin were married, but she then sacrificed herself to save the team. It wouldn't have to be an Imaginary Story, as I don't know that The Metal Men appeared much after that. That rebuilding should have been included in my article, just to be complete through their history, but I'd forgotten that it tied into those Silver Age adventures so closely. Thanks for reminding me! — MSA)

Known to fans worldwide as "Mr. Silver Age," **CRAIG SHUTT** has waxed nostalgic about comics of old in ***CBG*** since 1992. His latest book, ***Baby Boomer Comics***, is available from F+W Publications at (800) 258-0929, offer CBHCS. Send comments and suggestions to *craigshutt@ameritech.net*
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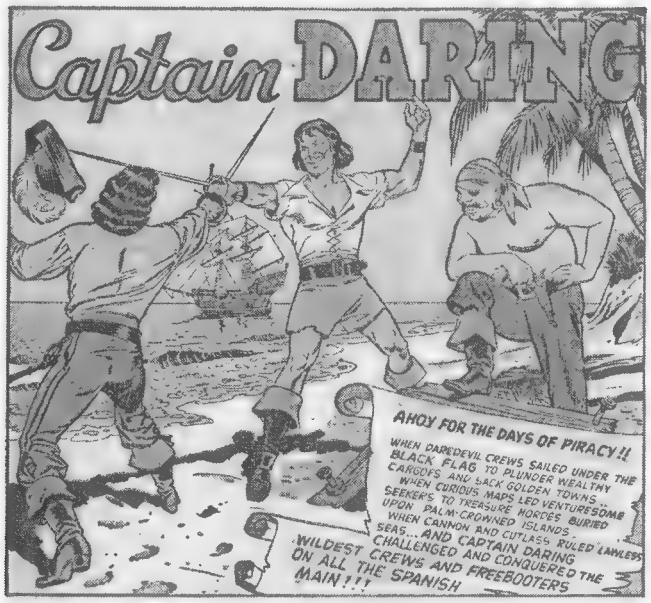
Let him take you on a sea cruise!

Sailing the seas with Captain Daring

by **MICHELLE NOLAN**



Captain Daring was much more than just Quality Comics' mid-century knockoff of the immortal characters Sea Hawk (1915) and Captain Blood (1921) by novelist Rafael Sabatini (1875-1950). Captain Daring was the Blackhawk of the Spanish Main.

That was fitting, considering that Blackhawk emerged as Quality's most commercially successful character in the 1950s, notwithstanding the far more enduring popularity of Plastic Man today in the *DC Archives* series.

During his Quality incarnation from 1941 to 1956, Blackhawk and his crew fought dozens of exotic villains and villainesses. Likewise, Captain Daring did the same during the frenetic, fun-filled, nine-issue run of *Buccaneers*, which was surely one of the most unusual comics on the crowded newsstands of 1950-51.

As portrayed by Reed Crandall, Captain Daring, during most of his 100-page existence as the lead in all nine issues of *Buccaneers*, was a dead ringer for Errol Flynn in the 1935 film *Captain Blood* and 1940's *The Sea Hawk*. Those marvelous films — which still hold up today, including their tongue-in-cheek aspects — set the standard for swashbucklers to follow. Captain Blood wound up being anything but a black-hearted pirate, unless you were part of the English establishment of his era. Captain Daring, likewise, was a seagoing Robin Hood.

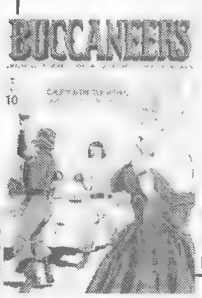
Although pirates had never been big in comic books, it's too bad that Captain Daring and *Buccaneers* became an odd failure during a tumultuous period for Quality, consistently one of the best of the Golden Age publishers but apparently the victim of major financial problems in 1950. "Captain Daring" was one of the better strips — certainly one of the most fun to read

Buccaneers #19 (#1) Jan 1950 ★★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Reed Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Crandall

Untitled Captain Daring story • 10 pp.

Captain Daring conquers Captain Shark, takes the Island of Illyria without firing a shot, convinces Sir Mark Drayton that he is really wants to use it as a base to fight pirates, and knocks out a rival for the Lady Dolores Drayton's hand.



How much more adventure could one 10-page story contain? This is a wonderful example of taut storytelling, albeit filled with all the "good-guy pirate" clichés.

Untitled The Spanish Main story • 6 pp.

Untitled Eric Falcon story • 7 pp.

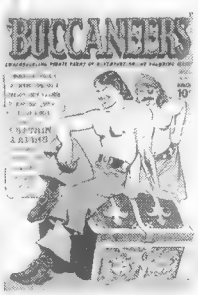
Best CGC copy: **9.0** **Then 10¢ NOW $320**

Buccaneers #20 (#2) Mar 1950 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Reed Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Crandall

Untitled Captain Daring story • 10 pp.

Captain Daring and sidekick Patch go after pirates who have stolen a charter needed to establish a parliament on Illyria — and defeat phony sea creatures in the process.



What looks like fantasy winds up being a dose of nicely done hard reality for the black-hearted baddies.

Untitled The Spanish Main story • 6 pp.

Untitled Eric Falcon story • 7 pp.

Untitled Black Roger story • 7 pp.

Best CGC copy: **9.4** **Then 10¢ NOW $240**

and among the easiest on the eyes — in the post-Golden Age chaos at mid-century.

Buccaneers began with #19 (Jan 50), taking over *Kid Eternity*'s numbering with what was an entirely new comic book. During Captain Daring's run through #27 (May 51), he and his Chop Chop-like sidekick, Patch, matched wits and often crossed swords with Captain Shark, Master Godophin, the high priestess Quilla, Captain Snuff, the villainess Tezca, Sir Archibald Corvis, the marauder Clews/King Plunder twosome, Admiral Blood, and the Captain Jigg/Captain Foxx duo — in that order.

The continuity was exceptionally good for a comic book of the era, albeit surely confusing to younger readers. Captain Daring remained constantly faithful throughout to the love of his life, the Lady Dolores, while taking a page from super-heroes who could never settle down because they were really married to fighting crime and evil.

Captain Daring apparently was a victim of the cut-throat comic-book economics of the era, because nothing like him appeared concurrently on the newsstands. The only rival title was Hillman's short run of *Pirates* #1 (Mar 50) through #4 (Oct 50), which couldn't come close to the quality (pun intended) of *Buccaneers*. Indeed, issues of *Pirates* are a lot tougher to find than *Buccaneers*, yet worth less than half the booty.

It must have been a coincidence, however, that Hillman's title made its debut two months after *Buccaneers*. Nor does it seem likely that Captain Daring could have been inspired by Seaboard's *Fast Fiction* #2 (Nov 49), which retold Sabatini's "Captain Blood," who originally appeared in 1921 in a series of stories in *Adventure*, one of the all-time best-selling pulps. The *Fast Fiction* issue was reprinted early in 1950 as *Stories by Famous Authors Illustrated* #2 from the same publisher. (The five-issue run of *Fast Fiction* was reprinted and incorporated as part of the 13-issue run of *Stories by Famous Authors*.)

The longest-running comic-book pirate, The Hawk, was created as *Hawks of the Sea* by Will Eisner and ran in Fiction House's *Jumbo Comics* from 1938-52, yet almost always as a short backup strip. A DC backup, Black Pirate, was long gone by the time *Buccaneers* hit the stands.

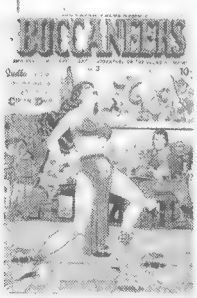
When romance comics exploded in 1949 after a modest but successful beginning in 1947-48, Quality gambled big-time on the new genre with no fewer than 14 titles in 1949-50 — but temporarily lost. Of the whopping total of 30 titles Quality published in the first half of 1950 — representing most genres and approaching the number of titles published by DC — publisher "Busy" Arnold's first-

Buccaneers #21 (#3) May 1950 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Reed Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Crandall

Untitled Captain Daring story • 10 pp.

Captain Daring foils a plot by the exotic priestess Quilla to set two warring tribes on the settlement of Illyria.



This is a version of Blackhawk on the Spanish Main — but it's fun and beautifully rendered by Reed Crandall, to boot.

Untitled The Spanish Main story • 6 pp.

Untitled Eric Falcon story • 7 pp.

Untitled Black Roger story • 7 pp.

"Woman's Weapon" • 1 text pp.

Best CGC copy: 8.5

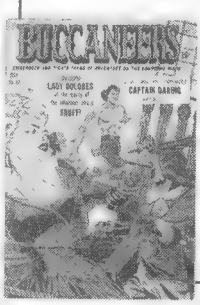
Then 10c NOW $240

Buccaneers #22 (#4) Jul 1950 ★★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Reed Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Crandall

Untitled Captain Daring story • 10 pp.

"I was taught not to whimper before sea-scum like you!" Lady Dolores pretty much sums up how she convinces Captain Daring to take on Captain Snuff.



The plots of these stories are about as dense as they can be considering their length, but even youngsters who were confused could follow the colorful art.

Untitled The Spanish Main story • 6 pp.

Untitled Eric Falcon story • 7 pp.

Untitled Black Roger story • 7 pp.

Best CGC copy: 8.5

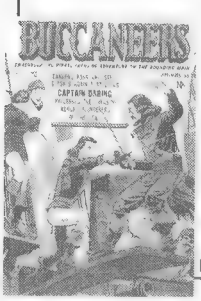
Then 10c NOW $185

Buccaneers #23 (#5) Sep 1950 ★★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Reed Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Crandall

Untitled Captain Daring story • 10 pp.

"Women scorned are all alike!" Captain Daring mutters before he walks the plank, as ordered by the female pirate Tezca.



The irony is that Tezca later winds up in Davy Jones' locker and Captain Daring's Lady Dolores once more has no competition for her affections.

Untitled The Spanish Main story • 6 pp.

Untitled Eric Falcon story • 7 pp.

Untitled Black Roger story • 7 pp.

"Priceless Cargo" • 1 text pp.

Best CGC copy: 8.0

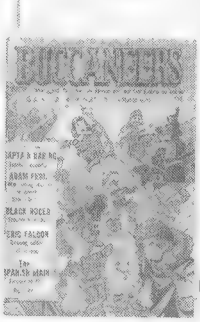
Then 10c NOW $185

Buccaneers #24 (#6) Nov 1950 ★★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

Untitled Captain Daring story • 13 pp.

Captain Daring returns to Illyria, only to find Governor Drayton imprisoned. Daring breaks him out with the help of Lady Dolores.



The expanded adventures of Captain Daring prove to be better than ever with creative continuity and such witty lines as, "I can only leave my heart as hostage."

Untitled Adam Peril U.S.N. story • 10 pp.

Untitled Black Roger story • 8 pp.

Untitled Eric Falcon story • 7 pp.

Untitled The Spanish Main story • 6 pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10c NOW $160

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rate company canceled 22 between May and October, including all 14 romance titles.

Buccaneers, however, was one of the eight survivors from late 1950 into 1951. (The others were *Blackhawk*, *Plastic Man*, *Doll Man*, *Crack Western*, *Marmaduke Mouse*, the teen *Candy*, and a new hard-boiled *Police Comics*, which had formerly featured Plastic Man.) Sad to say — since *Buccaneers* was a highly cool title — Quality forced its pirate crew to walk the economic plank midway through 1951 in favor of titles starring *Ken Shannon* and *T-Man* (Treasury agent Pete Trask), a pair of notably hard-boiled characters taken from *Police Comics*. Quality also revived three romance titles in 1951 and ultimately became one of the dominant romance publishers, with eight regular titles in 1954-56 before abruptly going out of the comic-book business.

Considering the dozens of romance titles on the stands while Quality was in business through good times and bad, it was a sad commentary on the business that room could not be found for *Buccaneers* or for any other long-running pirate comic. (None of the few attempts succeeded.)

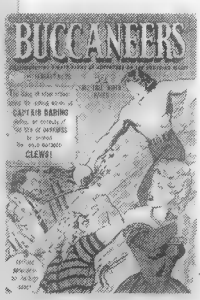
How could any red-blooded reader resist this blurb on the first "Captain Daring" splash page? "Ahoy for the days of piracy!! When daredevil crews sailed under the Black Flag to plunder wealthy cargoes and sack golden towns ... when curious maps led venturesome seekers to treasure hordes buried upon palm-crowned islands ... when cannon and cutlass ruled lawless seas ... and Captain Daring challenged and conquered the wildest crews and free booters on all the Spanish Main!!!" (Three exclamation points, indeed!)

Captain Daring's appeal was revealed midway through his first tale, after Captain Shark had been fed to the fish: "Aren't you glad we took *The Revenge* [Captain Shark's ship] instead of a merchantman or galleon, then?" Captain Daring asked Patch. "Aye, friends, why rob poor honest folk, when evil rascals like Captain Shark have things better worth our while?"

Aye, why, indeed? Why couldn't a pirate title succeed? I guess we'll never know.

Buccaneers #25 (#7) Jan 1951 ★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Reed Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Crandall



"The Ocean of Never Return!" • 13 pp.

Captain Daring rescues Lady Dolores from a hidden island kingdom and two villains — Clews and King Plunder.

This is the weakest of the Captain Daring stories to this point, if only because the internal logic doesn't make a whole lot of sense.

Untitled Adam Peril U.S.N. story • 10 pp.

"The Jaws of Allah!" (Black Roger) • 8 pp.

"The Surrender of Eric Falcon!" • 7 pp.

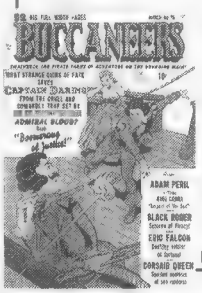
"Tigress of the Seas" (Corsair Queen) • 6 pp.

Best CGC copy: 9.0

Then 10¢ Now $160

Buccaneers #26 (#8) Mar 1951 ★★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Reed Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Crandall, Chuck Cuidera



"Boomerang for Justice!" • 12 pp.

Admiral Blood proves to be more than a match for Captain Daring — until a cannonball with a message he sent ultimately winds up being a head-cracker.

Tongue-in-cheek writing spices this clever tale of the eighth villain Daring dispatches in as many stories.

"Serpent of the Sea!" (Adam Peril) • 10 pp.

Untitled Black Roger story • 8 pp.

"Bloody Finger of Fate!" (Eric Falcon) • 7 pp.

"King of Corpse Cay!" (Corsair Queen) • 7 pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10¢ Now $160

Buccaneers #27 (#9) May 1951 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Reed Crandall
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"Alliance of Evil" • 12 pp.

Captain Daring's ship, *The Revenge*, sails into a trap set by two new villains, Captain Jigg and Captain Foxx, but Lady Dolores uses her wiles to help save her favorite pirate.

The last Captain Daring swashbuckler is one of the best, nicely plotted and filled with cocky quips from villains, heroes, and the great Lady Dolores.

"The Signet of the King!" (Adam Peril) • 10 pp.

"The Lady in the Iron Mask!" (Black Roger) • 7 pp.

"The Code of Treachery!" (Eric Falcon) • 6 pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10¢ Now $180

Scuttling Buccaneers

Early in 1949, Quality Comics became one of the few significant publishers to reduce the size of all its titles to 36 pages (including covers). Following the company's implosion in the second half of 1950, Quality returned to the 52-page format for a little less than a year in late 1950 and early 1951 with its surviving titles, including *Buccaneers* #24-27. Yet the move couldn't save *Buccaneers* despite the high caliber of its colorful contents, including lush, gorgeous art by Reed Crandall. This well-illustrated and well-written pirate title — one of the best collection of pirate stories ever done in comics — lasted only nine issues after taking over from *Kid Eternity* following the ghostly hero's 18-issue post-war run. Kids probably loved the art, which bursts with vitality, but the stories may have proven too difficult for young readers to follow. Of the numerous post-Golden Age title to emerge from Quality, *Buccaneers* was among the first to be canceled, while the classic company's romance titles enjoyed a resurgence in the 1951-52 period.

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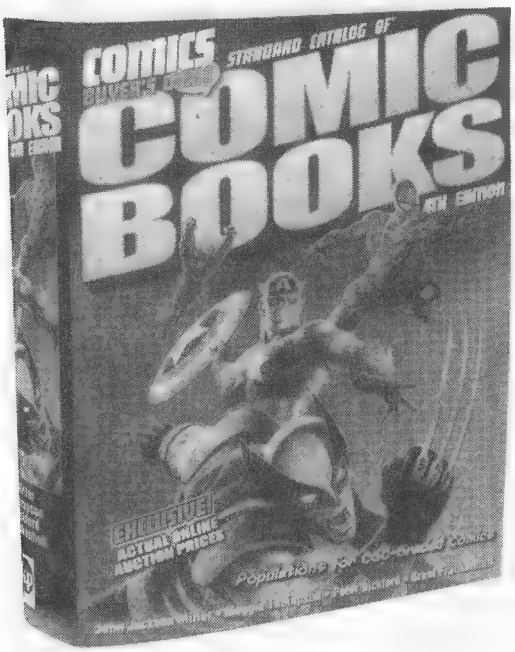

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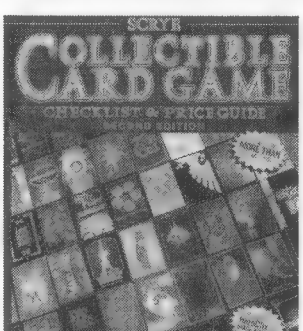

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This section features listings for retail comics stores around the U.S. arranged by state. Traveling comics collectors of all types search for new stores to dig through on their vacations, business trips, etc. (be sure you mention that you saw it in CBG!) Advertise your establishment here, include your name, contact person (this will not appear in the listing), address, city, state, zip, phone, fax, if you carry CBG in your store and approximately 10 words (or less) of miscellaneous description, for only $276.00 for 12 consecutive issues. Mail to: Comics Buyer's Guide, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990.

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Steve Borock

10 FAVORITE COMIC BOOK COVERS

The first in a series of favorites

Comics Guaranty LLC President and Primary Grader Steve Borock writes:

When Maggie and I had our annual Comic-Con International: San Diego "banana oatmeal crème brulée" breakfast at the Marriott this past summer, we talked, as always, non-stop about many projects we would love to do. One of those was that I would do a Top 10 covers list for ***CBG***. I told Maggie that seeing a little over 100,000 comics a year for the last seven years come through the doors at CGC and just being an all-around comic-book fanatic for about 30 years before CGC (I love all ages and genres), I could never pick only 10 comics as "my favorites," let alone 100. We came up with a different idea; I would pick my Top 10 favorites of a single theme when, if ever, I got a break from grading. Well, it is many months later, but I finally have my first list together: My top 10 "World War II Hitler" covers.

Here they are:

Marvel Mystery #46 © 1943 Marvel; art by Alex Schomburg

***Marvel Mystery* #46 (Aug 43).** "Just a very surreal cover! Hitler with this giant green head, tiny body, and a worm coming out of his ear. Add to the mix Alex Schomburg as the artist, a torture/bondage cover, three different kinds of Nazis, and The Human Torch burning off someone's face by punching it, and you have an amazing cover."

Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $1,125

Top 10 sponsored by: MASTRO AUCTIONS

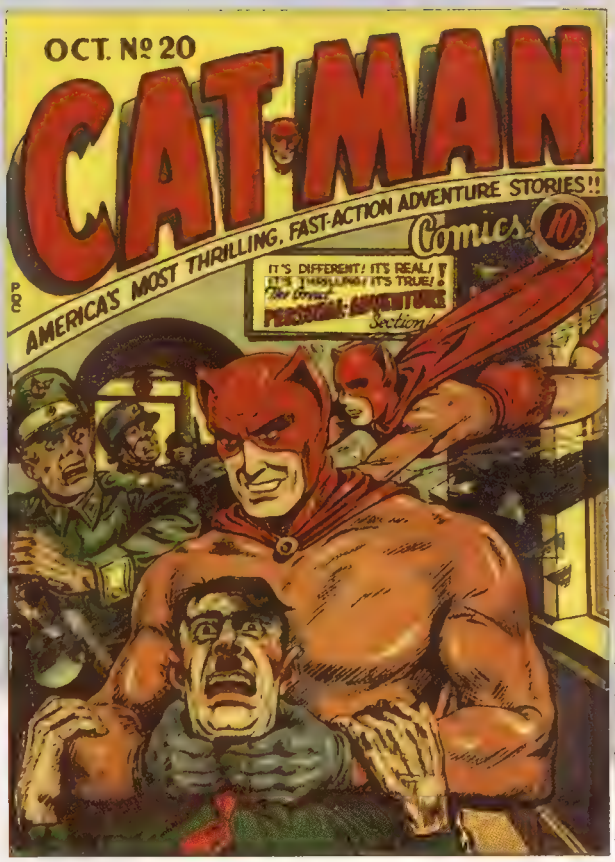
Great Comics #3 © 1942 Great Comics; uncredited cover

***Great Comics* #3 (Jan 42).** " 'Futuro takes Hitler to Hell' cover. An incredibly detailed cover, and the look on Hitler's face tells you he knows exactly why he should be very afraid to go into the depths of Hell. The title was canceled after this issue."

Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $660

Supersnipe #8 © 1943 Street & Smith; art by George Marcoux

***Supersnipe* #8 (Apr 43).** " 'He reads 'em, breathes 'em and sleeps 'em!' hey, sounds like me! This fun George Marcoux cover draws our little hero dreaming of throwing Hitler, along with his cohorts Mussolini and Tojo, into the fires of Hell to burn for all eternity. Satan looks on and smiles, knowing he is getting to play with and torture some of the most corrupt souls there ever were." **Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $415**



Catman #20 © 1943 Holyoke; uncredited cover

***Catman* #20 (Vol. 2 #7, Oct 43).** "Who, at the time, didn't want to have their hands wrapped tightly around Hitler's neck, squeezing the life out of him? Well, Catman gets to do it on this cover and, from the smile on his face, he's loving every minute of it! Charles (Chas) Quinlan really gets the emotions of the U.S. population correct on this one."

Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $590

Top 10 sponsored by: MASTRO AUCTIONS

***Mystic Comics* #9 (May 42).** "This Al Gabrielle cover has the usual and fantastic Timely torture-bondage depiction, as The Destroyer gives Hitler and Tojo a smackdown they'll never forget just in time to save the 'damsel in distress' from having her head squeezed in a box of metal spikes and then incinerated by the fire."

Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $1,700

Mystic Comics #9 © 1942 Marvel; cover by Al Gabrielle

***Real Life* #3 (Jan 42).** " 'Emperor of Hate' cover. The words just dripping blood! This is a wonderful depiction of Hitler as the world perceived him: standing on top of the world, gun in one hand and a human skull in the other. The look of hate and disdain for human life on his face as he stands above the burning of cities, concentration camps, raging war, and unnecessary slaughter and misery of innocents. It's no wonder Alex Schomburg is considered one of the top artists of his time."

Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $230

***Thrilling Comics* #41 (Apr 44).** "The Commando Cubs seem to be having a field day on this intricate Alex Schomburg cover. As with most of Schomburg's covers, there is much going on here. You have each of the Cubs doing his job: two tying Hitler to his bed, one throwing hand grenades to keep the Nazis away, one stealing secret orders from Hitler's dresser, and the fifth shooting around Hitler's head, hitting his headboard as if it were a circus show. Not only is all this going on, but you really have to check out Hitler and his bed. First the fact that he sleeps in his uniform and looks like an unhappy child is hilarious, but the bed itself is a scary piece of work. Topping off the bedposts are human skulls and bones, the blanket is a pattern of swastikas, and his headboard has a giant swastika on it. Now for the kicker: There is a pair of boots by the bed way too big for this skinny little Hitler. Looking by the foot of the bed, you can see a worried Mussolini in a night cap hiding underneath. Let's see ... the Cubs catch Hitler in bed, a large pair of boots are by that bed, and Mussolini is hiding under that bed. Do you think Schomburg was alluding to anything?"

Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $700

Thrilling Comics #41 © 1944 Better; art by Alex Schomburg

www.mastronet.com

Daredevil Battles Hitler © 1941 Lev Gleason; Cover by Charles Biro and Bob Wood

***Daredevil Battles Hitler* (Jul 41).** "This is the only time that an actual photo of Hitler was used on a World War II comic cover. With Charles Biro drawing this dynamic cover and featuring the 'original' Daredevil, it has always been, not only one of mine, but also an all-time fan favorite. The title became *Daredevil Comics* with #2."

Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $11,000

Superman #17 © 1942 DC; Cover by Fred Ray

***Superman* #17 (Jul 42).** "This is the best DC Hitler cover: a classic Fred Ray image! Superman is standing on top of the world holding Hitler by his collar in one hand and Hirohito in the other. Superman is scowling at Hitler, and Hitler has the look on his face of a child knowing he has been caught doing something he knew he should not be doing and knows he is about to be severely punished. This comic book is the first World War II Hitler cover I ever purchased."

Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $1,650

Uncle Sam Quarterly #5 © 1942 Quality; art by Al Gabrielle

***Uncle Sam Quarterly* #5 (Win 42).** "Another fabulous cover by Al Gabrielle. This one has our boy Uncle Sam tearing apart a giant green swastika symbolizing how the USA, with the help of our allies, were going to beat back and level that 'Axis of Evil.' At the bottom, you have Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo running for their lives. This title became the long-running *Blackhawk Comics* after #8." **Orig. price: 10¢ Current NM price: $500**

Top 10 sponsored by: MASTRO AUCTIONS

STAR WARS

Celebration IV

A NEW SHOW

It is a period of commemoration: Star Wars fans, striking out from home bases everywhere, arrive for a victorious Star Wars Celebration IV, this year marking the 30th Anniversary of far and away the greatest story in the galaxy.

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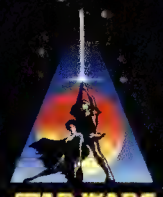

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ACTION FIGURE & TOY MARKET REPORT

by TOM BARTSCH

Save money in the new year

Here's something to kick off the New Year right: ideas to help you save money, along with collectibles that will make any collection that much better.

Banking on comics

Monogram is banking that comic-book fans will find its latest releases charming investments for their collections. While most of the comics-related statue and bust licenses have been taken by Diamond Select Toys, Bowen, and DC Direct, Monogram had the idea of picking up the bank and paperweight licenses. This might not seem like a big deal, but it lets Monogram make busts and statues of a *different* type — in the form of banks. The latest Marvel banks include Spider-Man, Wolverine, and Wolverine Unmasked.

The detail on the banks is not as sharp as that found on busts or statues, but you still get a good representation. There aren't serious embellishments on the Wolverine claws that would offend fans. Overall, these are great for younger collectors. More information is available via *www.monogramdirect.com.*

Mini Marvels

Sticking to something that won't break the bank, Diamond Select Toys and Art Asylum are introducing another assortment of Mini-Mates, this time based on next year's theatrical film *Ghost Rider*. The film will see the big-screen debut of the flame-covered Spirit of Vengeance in an all-star lineup.

Designed by Art Asylum, these Mini-Mates feature the same style and articulation as past releases. Two-packs will feature Blackheart and Ghost Rider, Roxanne and The Caretaker, and Johnny Blaze and Mephistopheles, and there's a limited-edition Johnny Blaze variant. These Mini-Mates are slated for a spring release. More information appears at *www.diamondselecttoys.com.*

The Ghost rides again

Sticking with a younger target audience is the upcoming Ghost Rider Vinyl Collectible Doll from Sideshow Collectibles and Medicom. Taking on the upstart urban theme that is sweeping metropolitan areas, this figure shows a different version of Ghost Rider than what fans will see on the big screen early in 2007.

This piece will retail for $59.99 and will be available in the first quarter of 2007. More information is available at *www.sideshowtoy.com.*

Toy Fair features Corgi and Master Replicas

Toy Fair is going to be exciting this year. Not only is this the showcase event for new-product releases for the year, but this will also be the first time Corgi and Master Replicas will show the fruits of their joint venture on a public stage.

Corgi and Master Replicas have announced their Toy Fair lineups: Comic-book fans can look forward to two comic-book cover scene replicas from Master Replicas. The first cover is "The Incredible Hulk" from 1962, based on the cover of *Incredible Hulk* #1, when the Hulk first appeared with gray skin. This will be available in June for $149.

The second replica is "Symbiote Spider-Man on Church Tower." This re-creates Spider-Man's internal battle with his "darker" side. It retails for $149 and will be available in May.

Corgi is using its Marvel license to continue its line of 1:12-scale metal figures in 2007. The figures, between six and seven inches tall, are limited to 2,500 pieces each. Look for "Ghost Rider" ($79.99), "Punisher" ($69.99), "Venom" ($69.99), "Elektra vs. Daredevil" ($149.99), and "Captain America vs. Wolverine" ($149.99).

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GAME REPORT NEWS

by **BILL BODDEN AND JAMES MISHLER**

Soccer CCG set to make American debut

PowerPlay Industries of Singapore has created and is marketing a collectible card game based on World Cup Soccer, and hopes to break into the U.S. market early in 2007. ***PowerShot Soccer*** was first released in Singapore in April 2006 and has since sold more than 3,000 starter decks in that market. The game is now poised to spread into Europe, Australia, and the United States in the coming months.

PowerShot Soccer uses generic plays and moves like Dribble, Pass, and Shoot to capture the fast-paced action of an international soccer match. Special play cards increase the power and effectiveness of your shots, and defensive cards such as Intercept and Save can keep your opponent from scoring or change teams from offense into defense if played at the right moment.

Starter decks are slated to retail for $8.99 each, while two-player starter packs are expected to retail for $13.99. Available at this time are decks representing the following nations: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, and South Korea. Designed to closely reflect the playing style and strategies of their respective teams, each nation has a unique deck with its own individual strengths and weaknesses. There are no separate booster packs available for the game at this time.

www.powershotsoccer.com

Highlander CCG returns in new edition

The ***Highlander*** collectible card game, based on the television series starring Adrian Paul and the films starring Christopher Lambert and Sean Connery, is set to return to games stores after a long hiatus. Originally published by Thunder Castle Games, the second edition of ***Highlander*** will be available from new publisher Le Montagnard at the end of 2006 or early in 2007, according to the company's website, *www.highlandertcg.com.*

Beta Edition products currently listed as available include 50-card starter decks for $12.99, nine-card booster packs for $3.99, and two limited-edition, direct-order-only items available for pre-order: a leather-bound, numbered binder with one each of the full set of ***Beta Edition Highlander*** cards, each stamped with gold foil and limited to 90 copies for $200, and a similar version that includes everything from the ***Beta*** set plus a complete set of uncut card sheets for $250, and limited to 10 copies.

Le Montagnard has announced an ambitious release schedule for the game. The first booster-only expansion will appear in January. The second expansion, a deck and booster set, is slated for March, and will feature the character Ramirez, played in the films by Sean Connery. The third set, an as-yet-untitled booster expansion, is scheduled to ship in May, with another deck and booster set based on the TV series ***Highlander: The Gathering*** due in July, plus two more sets due later in the year.

According to publisher Mike Sager, most of the old cards will be playable with ***Second Edition***, but tournament and prize support will concentrate on the new cards. "Over the decade that we published *Highlander*, I learned a lot about what made the game fun. I believe over the interim I have incorporated many things that will make it better at what it was good at and diminish what it was not good at."

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(s07)

ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW CARDS

by **HARLAN ELLISON**

Carding the Monster

He was wearing an extremely noisy *faux*-Hawaiian shirt, the overall pattern of which echoed the hues of the glop he was forking up into his mouth from the unidentifiable entrée on his brunch plate. That was the moment in which — as Susan and I stepped up onto the open air patio of the restaurant — I did what Susan has asked me a hundred times *not* to do.

("Please, fergodsake, stop initiating conversations with total strangers on the streets of the world! You only alarm them!")

"So how's the food?"

We were down in San Diego. I was lecturing later. We were grabbing brunch at a well-known restaurant on the Esplanade.

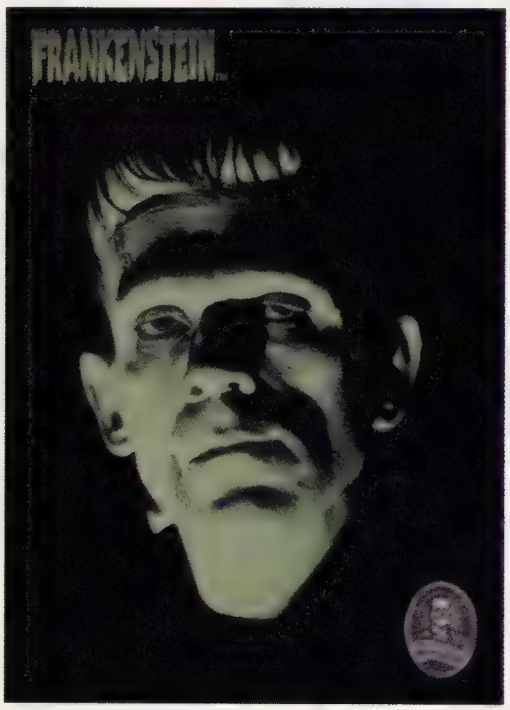
"Goob," answered one of the quintet of *turistas*.

"What *is* that?" I asked the glop-forking guy. I stood over him. He looked up. "Cheese quesadilla," he said. Not like any such *I* had ever encountered. "So. How is it?" I asked.

"Awesome," he said, doing the fork again.

Now: it's a fair cop that I was intruding, that I had no credit on my side to say what I thereafter said, that I am contentious and contumelious pain in the ass, nonetheless —

"Your mother didn't raise you to misuse the English language," I said. "*Awesome* is Grand Canyon. *Awesome* is the Greater Magellanic Cloud. *Awesome* is Frankenstein's monster, Eleanor Roosevelt, Enrico Fermi, or King Kong. A fargin' *cheese quesadilla* cannot be 'awesome'."



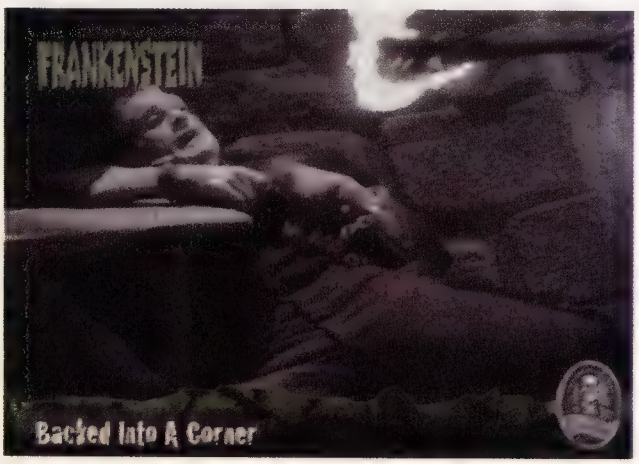
At which point, since they were in their minds rehearsing for a roadshow revival of *The Ox-Bow Incident*, my wife done dragged me outta there.

Now put aside your attention to that little scene, and check out what I, a noted savant, fastened onto as metaphor without really thinking about it. Some extremely *awesome* tropes. Not least of which invoked the name of Frankenstein.

Popular culture produces its icons in USDA-like categories. The *E. coli*-tainted dogmeat is the Paris Hiltons and Pauly Shores. Slightly higher, you get Pete Rose and Charlie Manson. Keep going up the chart and you can savor Duke Ellington and Laurette Taylor and Sgt. York. But at the very prime top elite triple-A pinnacle of the popular culture posterity chart, you find only a few residents: Marilyn Monroe, Robin Hood, Superman, the *Titanic*, *etcetera etcetera*, and (knowing the difference between Dr. Frankenstein and his creation, often referred to with the same monicker) the ongoing iconography of the loins of director James Whale, novelist Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, and the great Boris Karloff.

Frankenstein.

It is without argument one of the all-time most recognizable, most resonant, most unforgettable creations of the febrile intellect of the massmind. It is an allegory for



faith and despair, love and revenge, ungodly experimentation and human foible. It is, in sum, just about the best stocking-stuffer I've seen in years ...

Presented, as I urge you to take note, in a new, terrific 72-trading card basic set from Artbox. It premiered early in November, and I have no idea what kind of trash 'n' trifles you planned to use when gorging the argyles, but, if you have the audacity of a Senate gun lobbyist and barely the smarts of a mud-fly, you will have the same epiphany I had when upbraiding that tourist, and give *the* iconic gift this year: Frankenstein Trading Cards.

Virtually every still from the 1931 film, in black and white — as is proper — but embroidered in a charmingly putrescent *Exorcist*-pea-green. Niched in nine-pocket Ultra-Pro plastic sleeves, the basic 72 retell the mesmerizing tragedy step by step, held *in situ* by a huge (no, say not huge, say massive, say gargantuan, say *awesome*) 11"x12" three-ring embossed binder sporting Karloff and (that) incredible jawline.

But wait, as they say in Ginsu World, there's *more*:

The cards come in packs of eight, and in every box of 24

Above: In addition to his prolific writing and editing (read more about his latest projects beginning on Page 34), Harlan Ellison [who provided this image from years gone by] is a voracious collector of all sorts of neat, weird stuff including these cards.

packs, Artbox attempts to drive you insane by including either a glow-in-the-dark *Frightful Figure* of the monster or his Bride ... or an even rarer clear figurine. There are subsets to make you even crazier: behind-the-scenes of the making of the movie cards, Horror Sketch Cardz and Horror-Glo Cards. You could go broke and/or spend your adult life as a vagabond merely chasing down all the variables.

But why bother?!! I'm telling you that the basic set, which you'll get twice-over per each box, is a gift that, when given, will show how urbane, how thoughtful, how bold you are. And even though the holidays will have passed by the time you get around to reading this, remember:

It is a world filled with dementos who may know what *awesome* really means, and how it should be used, but such people are dangerous and very likely the only thing that may save you when they cut your trail, is proffering a nifty trading card with a blasphemous congeries of dead parts thereon memorialized. I'm only sayin'.

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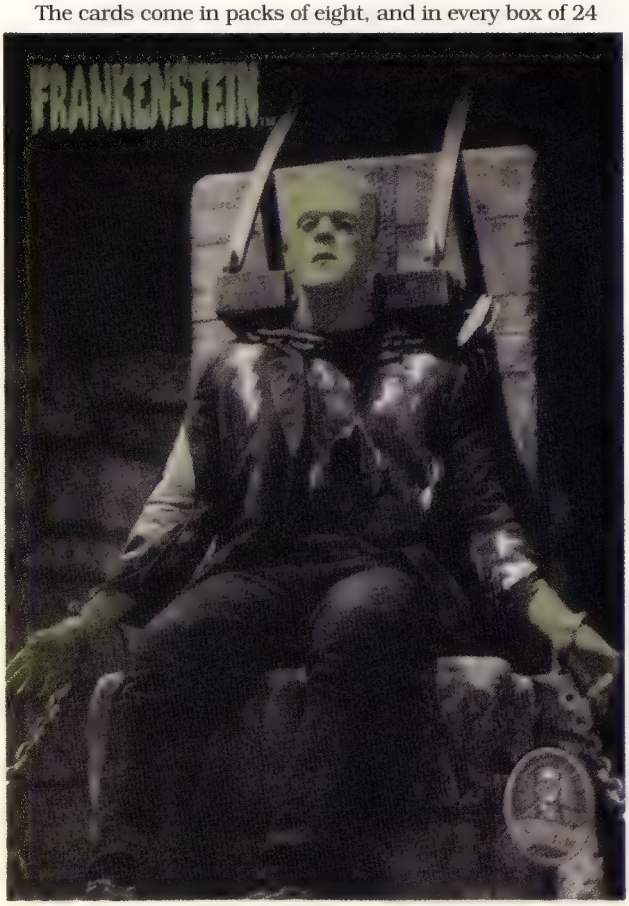
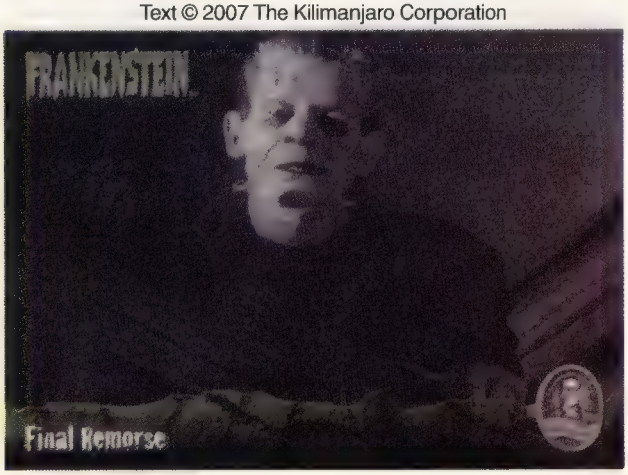




Are publishers looking at the wrong demographic?

The Age of Wonder

by **MARC PATTEN**

How old were you when you read your first comic book, when you picked up that four-color stapled bundle of goodness and for the next 20 minutes were so engrossed by the story that, on finishing, you put it down on the table, stood up, and said, "I want *more*."

Sure, many of us can proudly claim they've been reading comics since age 5. But really, even today with everything in the modern education system being accelerated compared to a few decades ago, children don't learn to read fluently in school until at least the first grade. My first comic was *Justice League of America* #114 (Dec 74). I was 6 — you do the math — but the comic that got me hooked was several years later: *Superman* #307 with the story, "Krypton No More," that ended in a cliffhanger and blew my almost-9-year-old mind.

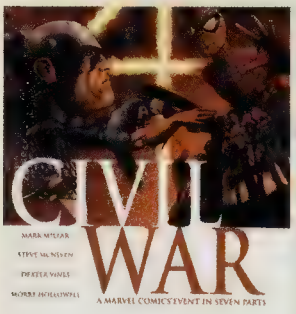
Back then, comics were regularly available in every convenience, grocery, and drugstore in town. There were only about 50 or so total monthly titles that came out in the '70s, and, although I was primarily a DC fan, I had an advantage over most comics readers. My father owned a pharmacy, and the nice lady who managed the front of the store, Annie, usually saved one of each comic that came in and sent them home with my dad each week. In those days, new-magazine day was Mondays, and, on Monday night, the first thing I'd say to my dad when he came home from work was "Did you remember my comics?"

Sadly, I wasn't allowed to keep all of them — only about three or four per week. But I could *read* all of them. From *Richie Rich* and *Little Lotta* to *Archie*, *Daredevil*, and *Batman*, I read just about every newsstand comic from 1977 into the mid-1980s. Not every kid has that sort of access. I realize how lucky I was. In an interview that DC President and Publisher Paul Levitz gave to *Newsarama.com*'s Matt Brady in early December, Levitz described how the model had changed over time with respect to where comics are purchased.

He said, "I'm old enough that I came in at 5 or 6 years old, reading comics in a carton that the kid three doors up the street had, and progressing from there, to buying them as soon as I was allowed at the neighborhood candy store two streets away. It's a model that has obviously been pretty well extinct for a while. Then we made it up

Dozen to dig for

A bunch of new additions this month, and believe it or not, none of them has to do with the monster that still leads the pack: Marvel's *Civil War*. Will *Spider-Man: Reign* be the definitive "Dark Knight" for The Web-Slinger, or is the interior-art controversy creating all the hype? Do the successes of *Onslaught Reborn* and *newuniversal* mean a big return to old concepts as new ideas? The Punisher is hot again, and Blue Devil is ripe for a major comeback, so anything can happen.



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1. *Civil War* #1-4. Oh, my God, they're gonna kill Cap! Oh, no, they're going to kill Iron Man! Oh man, the rumors are spreading so fast and furious, and no one has a clue about the outcome. But one thing is for sure: Come next month, things will never be the same in the Marvel universe again. May-Jul 06 Cover: $2.99 Current prices: #1, #3, and #4 $5 @; #2 $7; 2nd print: $8

2. *Spider-Man: Reign* #1. The first issue of this mini-series by Kaare Andrews shows a "Dark Knight" future version of Peter Parker that isn't so pleasant. Sellouts across the country have added to the buzz, and the controversy of a naked Parker shown inside is only driving up the curiosity factor. Dec 06 Cover: $2.99 Current prices: #1 (black costume) 1st print: $8; #2 (red costume) 1st print: $6

3. *Justice League of America* #0/#1 (tie). The only series that matches this one in quality is the recent arrival of DC's *Justice Society of America*. Watch for these two blockbuster hits to cross over later this year, rekindling the awesomeness of the JLA-JSA team-ups of yore. Oct-Nov 06 Cover: $2.99 @ Current prices: $6 @

4. *Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter: Guilty Pleasures* #1 and #2 (tie). DBPro and Marvel have a hit on their hands, and fans are gobbling up any and all printings and variant covers of this quality series. Oct-Nov 06 Cover: $2.99 @ Current prices: #1 1st print: $12; #2 1st print: $7

5. *Black Panther* #21 and #22 (tie). It's the *She-Hulk* #8 syndrome all over again, and you saw what happened there, right? Issue #21 wasn't even labeled a

to kids starting when they were old enough to get to the comics shop on their own, or when their parent hands them one. But we've seen enormous growth in the last few years of people coming in their teens and young adult years."

Logistics are a funny thing, and Levitz is 100% correct. Until the proliferation of the direct market as the main source for new comic books, you could probably, as early as 8 or 9 years old, ride your bike or walk to a local store that carried comics. There were no "kids' comics" in the adventure realm, *per se*. There were just "comics." Yes, you had the *Super Friends* series based on the cartoon and occasionally such one-shots as *Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends*, but, other than *Archie as Pureheart the Powerful*, the types of comics available were much more limited.

Today, finding comics in a local supermarket or convenience store is tough. The average person has to travel at least 20 minutes by car to get to the "local" comics shop. That's too far for a kid to walk and too far for a child under the age of 13 to ride a bike. So where does that take us? It means that it's difficult for kids to find or buy comics until they reach high-school age.

At a convention recently, I was talking to a collector — I'll call him Stan — who was interested in buying early Power Rangers toys from the early to mid-1990s. Before you laugh, I'll throw a bit of reality into the mix: That "kid" is 21 years old, just graduated from college, and working at his first job. He was 8 in 1994, when *Power Rangers* first aired. They are from his "Golden Age," as Maggie Thompson is fond of saying.

Stan also collected comics, and we talked for a while about what he read and what hooked him. Seems that he had always liked comic-book characters from television, videogames, and whatnot and had been given or purchased a comic or two as he got older, but Mom never had time to drive him to the comic-book store. When he was finally old enough to get to a comics shop on his own (in high school), the habit started. The more he read, the more he bought. At age 17 or 18, he was hooked, and he now reads all types of comics, from mainstream super-heroes to independents.

My hypothesis is this: Videogames and the Internet haven't prevented a new generation of young kids from getting hooked on comic books; the failing distribution network did. With no access to comics, kids can't buy what they don't know about or see on a regular basis. There are no comics in most drugstores any more, since such chains as CVS and Walgreens don't feel they are a profitable enough periodical to carry. Even the department stores that used to carry Whitman-branded three-packs of comics don't do that any more. And out of sight, out of mind.

Even the department stores that used to carry Whitman-branded three-packs of comics don't do that any more.

This brings us to the present day. Comic-book-related movies and graphic novels are part of the public consciousness now. The bookstore trade has embraced the art form, carrying the top 25 or 50 trade paperbacks and graphic novels. Teens love to hang out at bookstores and malls. See where I'm going with this? The new age for breeding new readers of comics is teens and college kids.

It's funny to think that it was rumored back in the '60s and early '70s that a good portion of people reading Marvel Comics weren't kids at all, but college students. Whether it was for the psychedelic dreamscapes of Doctor Strange, the philosophic adventures of The Silver Surfer, or the "poor me" tales of Spider-Man or The Thing, those comics had more adult themes and appealed to an older audience.

I might argue that "kids" haven't read comics feverishly for more than 30 years. We all know that comics have grown more sophisticated in the types of stories told. Your average 12-year-old would love to get his hands on the types of stories we read every week in our stack of goodies, but he can't

Civil War tie-in, and, while #22 added the logo, it still sold out like lightning. Both had extremely low print runs compared to the other crossover titles, and of course, fans want 'em all. Nov 06 Cover: $2.99 @ Current prices: #21 1st print: $25; #22: $6

6. *Action Comics* #844 and #845 (tie). The mystery of the kid from Krypton deepens just in time for *Superman II: The Richard Donner Cut* DVD to make waves across the land. A top-notch creative team with a top-notch story make a top-notch hit. Dec 06 Cover: $2.99 @ Current price: 1st print: $6 @

7. *Amazing Spider-Man* #529, #530, #531, and #532 (tie). Now that the real down-on-his-luck (and on the run) Peter Parker is back — You didn't think all that easy living would last forever, did ya? — will the Iron Spidey era hold its own? So far, so good for these *Civil War*-topped goodies. Feb 06-May 06 Cover: $2.99 @ Current prices: #529 1st print: $15; 2nd print: $6; 3rd print (Wieringo variant): $5; #530: $12; #531 and #532: $7 @

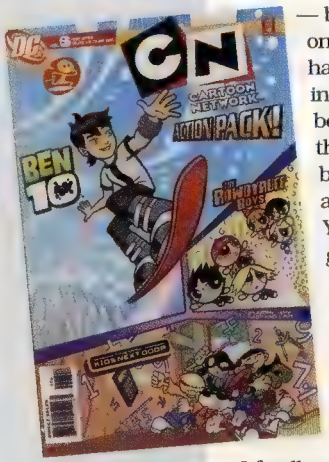
8. *Civil War* tie-ins: *She-Hulk* #8 and *Wolverine* #42 (tie). These two early *Civil War* tie-ins are the blue chips of the series bandwagon. They are impossible to find, and prices are holding strong and steady. Jun 06-Aug 06 Cover: $2.99 Current prices: *She-Hulk* #8 1st print: $25; *Wolverine* #42 1st print: $12

9. *Star Wars* #1s (tie). The Force is strong in this one. This trio of first issues has proven that Dark Horse's *Star Wars* franchise is stronger than it's been in years. If you've missed the return to greatness, it's still not too late to catch up with the trade paperbacks. Jan-Jun 06 Cover: $2.99 Current price: *Star War: Knights of the Old Republic* #1: $12; *Star Wars: Legacy* #1: $12; *Star Wars: Rebellion* #1: $8

10. *Onslaught Reborn* #1. Ten years later, the magic of the fan-favorite creative duo of Jeph Loeb and Rob Liefeld still holds up. Onslaught appearances are being hunted like crazy, as fans bought up this comic in droves, demonstrating that good, old-fashioned super-hero action is never out of style. Dec 06 Cover: $2.99 Current price: 1st print $6

11. *New Avengers Illuminati* (one-shot) and *New Avengers* #7 (tie). The first issue of the *New Avengers: Illuminati* mini-series finally hit this month, and it's a monster. We've been warning you for months to dig up these two tough-to-find issues of the secret group's first appearances. Did you listen? Apr 06 Cover: $3.99; Mar 06 Cover: $2.99 Current prices: *New Avengers: Illuminati* #1 1st print: $14; *New Avengers* #7: $8

12. *newuniversal* #1. Marvel's "New Universe" one-shots had lackluster response, but Warren Ellis' new take on these 20-year-old concepts have caused sellouts across the nation. This has major sleeper hit written all over it. Dec 06 Cover: $2.99 Current price: 1st print: $8



— because he can't get them. A 16-year-old, on the other hand, goes to the mall and hangs out. He sees the graphic-novel section in the bookstore, and, heck, they practically beg you to sit and read or browse stuff these days. He or she is all about the big summer super-hero blockbusters or anarchy-themed movies like *V for Vendetta*. You get him or her hooked and there is a good chance you can reel them in.

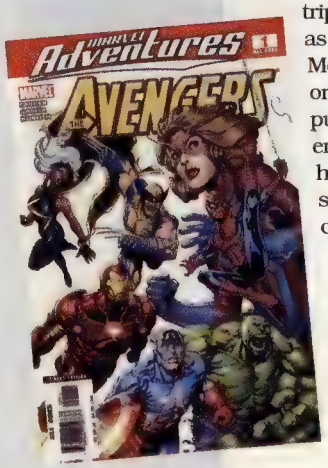
I want the comics-shop model to survive and thrive, I really do. But, if we can't use the breeder system of getting fans to sample our products from these other venues, there'll be big problems coming down the pike. In the '80s, when I finally got my driver's license, I wasn't just excited to be mobile and take my friends or girlfriends places, but I looked forward to cruising to the comics shop for a few hours on a Saturday. It's not that I wasn't still getting comics from Dad's drugstore to read, although the comics shop *did* get new issues three weeks earlier. It was the fact that there was so much *more* available there: independent titles, back issues, posters, memorabilia, and the biggest thing of all — other people who liked comics.

Newsstands used to be the feeder system for the direct market, and, when that avenue closed up, we lost a whole generation of readers. Gone. Now we have a chance to get that back again, and things can be even better than before. Why? Because it isn't 9-year-olds who are looking for more to read any more, it's teenagers with jobs and disposable income. Instead of a $10 allowance each week to spend, these kids have $20 or more.

This is the audience the larger publishers need to attack. Forget the kids. Forget creating giant lines of kids' comics. Kids don't read comics, and there isn't a heck of a lot any of us can do about it, save inserting them into toys and videogames for free, or having Mom or Dad physically hand the child one.

The Jonny DC and *Marvel Adventures* lines are for parents and grandparents to buy as cheap entertainment to amuse a kid aged 6 to 10 for a trip in the car or for summer camp.

I don't mean that the Jonny DC and *Marvel Adventures* lines should be canceled. But that stuff is for parents and grandparents to buy as cheap entertainment to amuse a kid aged 6 to 10 for a trip in the car or for summer camp. It's almost as if those periodicals have to be force-fed. Most kids aren't running out to buy them on their own. An adult is usually doing the purchasing. Any child old enough to read an entire *Harry Potter* novel by himself or herself has the potential to be interested in the sophisticated illustrated stories only comics can offer.



I've even noticed a shift in the advertising I've seen in comics over the last five years. Previously, it was all about the kids: toys, toothpaste, and other fun knickknacks a kid would normally see on TV and prompt a parent to buy for them. Only no one bothered to tell these advertisers in the late 1990s that we'd lost a generation of readers and kids don't read comics. Enter the modern era, and advertisers are realizing that an even *more* coveted demographic *is* actually *reading* comics: the 16-25 demo. If you're in that age bracket and read comics or graphic novels, it's not so odd any more. In some circles, it's actually *cool*. Enter the videogame manufacturers and deodorant companies and skateboarding companies and movie studios and any wireless-technology-based product, and, bam, instant connection.

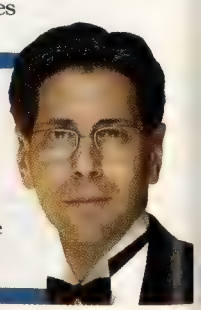
The videogame industry has the right attitude, and it is about seven years ahead of the comics industry. Yes, there are family-friendly games marketed to younger kids. But the *real* money is in more sophisticated games aimed at teens and older. These are the folks who actually have $50 to spend on a game. The videogame manufacturers haven't been a part of the toy industry since the early 1990s. I can't remember when this occurred, but I *do* remember reading the annual toy-industry reports, and they used to separate the videogame sales from all other games sales. The videogame manufacturers don't even exhibit at the International Toy Fair annual industry trade event in New York. They've "grown up," so to speak, from the days of the Atari 2600, Intellivision, or ColecoVision game systems.

Comics have grown up, too. One intake of the complexities of Marvel's *Civil War* storyline or DC's *Identity Crisis* series or *Infinite Crisis* event, and you can taste the juices of folks finally taking this medium seriously.

I want to see full-blown comics and graphic-novel sections in every college bookstore. We also need to have more free modern content online to tease new readers into stores or online markets where they can buy more. When I saw DC's online ad link promoting the first issues of a multitude of Vertigo titles available to read free online, I applauded. But there has to be more — not just Vertigo or "mature readers" titles, but super-heroes, science-fiction, and other adventure series, as well, need to be up there for all publishers. Offering the first one free is the bait. Then hook them for more.

Companies complain that they don't know where to go to promote their titles to that young, hip audience with all the money. The answer is right in front of their faces: their own corporate websites. Show them, and they will come. Offer a free sample, and, if they like it, they'll be back. Today's teens are a smart bunch. They'll find you. And, if you're so bold and smart, make sure that they know the next step is only 20 minutes away — at the local comics shop.

MARC PATTEN owns Destination Entertainment, a marketing and product-development consulting company, and Heroes in Action, a pop-culture products convention and mail-order business. He can be reached at *heroesinaction@aol.com*.



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Besieged by a mouse, a publisher change, and other factors

Fans come to Anita Blake's rescue

by **WILLIAM INSIGNARES**

One of the most-requested comic books in 2006 wasn't even listed in Diamond's ordering catalog *Previews*. A much-sought-after variant was given away, and few knew about it until it was gone and hot. How can this be possible? *Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter — Guilty Pleasures* has suffered from scheduling conflicts, deadline pressures, and printing issues but has emerged from the dark as what may be the sleeper hit of 2006 by default.

Chances are that, if you are not an avid reader of horror-fiction novels, you may not have heard of Anita Blake until recently. In the same way, many Anita Blake fans had never set foot into a comics shop until recently.

A much sought-after variant was given away, and few knew about it until it was gone and hot. How can this be possible?

Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter — Guilty Pleasures is a 12-issue comics adaptation of Laurell K. Hamilton's series of prose novels. Adapted to the comics format by writer Stacie M. Ritchie and artist Brett Booth, the series was all set to be published via the Dabel Bros. Productions label, before that imprint hooked up with Marvel. This sudden change created a scheduling conflict that caused the debut issue to miss the *Previews* printing deadline. Instead, the first issue was available for order via Diamond and Marvel's online order-adjustment system for retailers, which has an open window of just a few days.

While Dabel Bros. was set up and all ready to enlighten retailers on *Anita Blake* at the Diamond Retailer Summit in Baltimore in September, there was one small problem: a mouse — or, rather, *Mouse Guard*. What was arguably the hottest independent comic of 2006, *Mouse Guard* from Archaia Studio Press was also there — set up right next to Dabel. There was a huge line that stretched past the front of the Dabel booth to get copies of *Mouse Guard* signed by creator David Petersen — because it was free, it was signed, and it was worth dollars.

As the retailers, including me, shuffled through the line toward the Archaia signing, I did manage to grab a couple copies of *Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter — Guilty Pleasures Exclusive Preview Edition*. This was the only Anita Blake comic that was actually published under the Dabel Brothers imprint as a gift to retailers that attended the function. If this same setting were to occur at a Diamond Summit in 2007, Archaia would be the publisher in danger of being trampled, and Dabel would be packed, as retailers scurry to get Hamilton's autograph.

It all raises questions involving why this series didn't go directly into the grave. It would have, if not for the legions of devoted Anita Blake and Laurell K. Hamilton fans who called comics stores across the nation to ask when the comics series would be published. Though for several months, little information was given to retailers to pass to fans (usually another comics killer), a strange thing happened: The fans grew even more determined.

Soon, retailer message boards were abuzz about *Anita*, with such messages as: "Who is Anita?" and, "I forgot to order it," and "These people are driving me crazy for it!" The book had obviously been under-appreciated, under-ordered, set for burial, but the fans pulled it from its coffin and made it a priority at stores.

As the first issue came out of limbo, the feasting began, and fans went wild for it, with most buying multiple copies. For the lucky few retailers that ordered plenty of copies, there were two ordering-incentive variants (besides the Baltimore one): One was a sketch cover; the other, an intense-action color cover by Greg Horn. Both variants initially sold for about $25 to $35 each, and that price has held. Certified copies in 9.8 do sell for more, with reports of some selling for more than $100. The regular first-printing issue has vanished, followed by a second printing that is all but gone. The first printings of #1 sell for around $6.95 but may be higher by the time you read this.

Sometimes, you can have the greatest plan in the world along with the desire, the product, the capital, and the connections to make it all happen. Even so, you just might end up getting by only with a little help from your friends.

Comics specialist **WILLIAM INSIGNARES** runs *DemolitionComics.com* in Tampa, Fla., which he bills as "The world's first multi-lingual international comics super store." He can be contacted at (813) 832-2692.

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52 #26

Insular, inside, and totally for hardcore DC fans, *52* is about a year without Superman and Batman in the DC universe. Although the talent applied to this massive endeavor cannot be denied, this issue is pretty pointless. A group of super-heroes visit more "amazing" people, enjoy dinner, and discover an "amazing" new creature with "amazing" powers.

DC
WRITERS:
VARIOUS
ARTISTS:
VARIOUS
COLOR • 40 PGS.
$2.50

The crossover points out the weakness that plagues both of The Big Two: their universes. Both are top-heavy with hundreds of "special" individuals with "amazing" powers. The problem is: One person with that power is unique; hundreds of people with amazing powers are not even unusual.

Another glaring weakness is this: Without Superman and Batman, the DC universe is kind of lame. Who's going to lead the heroes? Wonder Woman? The Flash? One of the many Green Lanterns? How many times do we have to sit through another revamp of *Power of Shazam*? The Captain Marvel character hasn't been relevant since the '40s; most of the original fans are *dead*. How many more trees will DC kill to revamp a character whose first issue some *grandfathers* missed because they hadn't been born?

★½ — Tony DiGerolamo

▲ #1

The BRAVE and the BOLD

A new anthology

DC introduced its latest anthology, *The Brave and the Bold*, in 1955. Early issues featured the adventures of such heroes as The Silent Knight, Viking Prince, The Golden Gladiator, and Robin Hood. Later, the series would feature super-hero team-ups.

image © 1955 DC Comics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
NM Price	AUG 55 $3000	OCT 55 $1500	DEC 55 $700	FEB 56 $650	APR 56 $650	JUN 56 $500	AUG 56 $500	OCT 56 $500	DEC 56 $500	FEB 57 $500

Viking Prince, Golden Gladiator, Silent Knight stories; Joe Kubert art

Robin Hood begins

THE BOTTOM LINE

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Action Comics DC, 1938	
0	3
1	330000
➥1st Superman	
1/Ashcan	20000
2	29250
3	19000
4-5	10600
6	15400
7	15500
8-9	6650
10	8200
11-12	4150
13	6175
14	3825
15	6175
16	3125
17	4350
18	3825
19	4050
20	3825
21-22	2600
23	7300
➥1st Luthor	
24-25	2475
26	2060
27-30	1700
31-32	2600
33	7300
➥1st Mr. America	
34-35	2475
36	2060
37-40	1700
41	1050
42	2600
➥1st Vigilante	
43-46	980
47	1300
➥1st Luthor cover	
48-52	980
53	850
54-60	710
61-63	630
64	750
65-70	630
71-99	580
100	600
101	1200
➥A-Bomb cover	
102-126	525
127	600
128-150	525
151-157	480
158	750
➥Superman origin	
159-161	450
162	500
163-180	385
181-201	340
202-220	290
221-240	240
241	250
242	1200
➥1st Brainiac	
243-251	185
252	1200
➥1st Supergirl	
253	425
254	325
255	225
256-261	100
262	90
263	100
264-266	80
267	650
➥1st Colossal Boy	
268-270	80
271-275	65
276	125
➥Legion app.	
277-284	60
285	100
➥Legion app.	
286-294	60
295	90
296	65
297	90
298-299	60
300-316	50
317-324	40
325	50
326-333	40
334	60
335-338	40
339	70
340-346	40
347	50
348-362	40
363-373	30
374-387	20
388	25
389-399	20
400	40
401-406	17
407	15
408	20
409	15
410-411	13
412-415	12
416-418	11
419	14
420-422	11
423-424	10
425	19
426	10
427-436	8
437	29
➥Giant-size issue	
438-439	8
440	25
➥1st Grell Green Arrow	
441	12
442	8
443	26
➥Giant-size issue	
444-454	7
455-465	6
466	7
467-484	5
485	8
486-503	5
504-544	4
545-566	3
567-597	2
598	15
➥1st Checkmate	
599	2
600	5
601-659	2
660	3
661	2
662	4
663-682	2
683-684	3
685-687	2
687/Collector's	3
688-695	2
695/Variant	3
696-699	2
700	3
700/Platinum	5
701-769	2
770	4
771-774	2
775	5
775/2nd	4
776-799	2
800	4
801-810	2

RetroView the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN™

MARVEL COMICS

Reviewed by Brent Frankenhoff

After ending 2001 with a stellar issue paying tribute to the events of September 11, J. Michael Straczynski, John Romita Jr., and Scott Hanna continued their excellent work in 2002. In addition to working with Aunt May's new knowledge of Peter's secret identity, the issues also covered his separation and attempted reconciliation with Mary Jane, introduced a deadly successor to Doctor Octopus, and gave Spidey a new mystical enemy. During the year, there was a two-month jump in cover dates, leaving readers with just 10 issues cover-dated 2002, but they packed a punch.

Amazing Spider-Man ™ Marvel

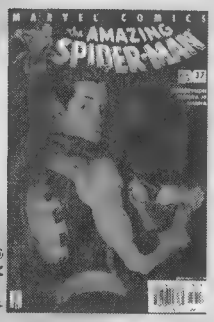
COST TO OWN THE ORIGINALS IN NM: $30

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
811	5
812	8
812/2nd	2
813	4
814-817	3
818	4
819-825	3
826	5
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
827-828	3
829	6
829/Variant	3
830	4
831-843	3
1000000	1
Ann 1	4
Ann 2-6	3
Ann 7	4
Ann 8	3
Ann 9	4
Adventure Comics DC, 1938	
32	2800
33-35	1450
36-39	1275
40	36000
➥1st Sandman	
41	4700
42	5500
43	3200
44	5500
45	2800
46-47	4200
48	22000
➥1st Hourman	
49-50	1950
51	2630
➥Sandman cover	
52	1600
➥1st Kirk Manhunter	
53-59	1450
60	2500
61	10750
➥1st Starman	
62-65	1300
66	1800
67-68	1300
69	1650
70-71	1275
72	13200
➥1st Kirby Sandman	
73	11500
➥1st Kirby Manhunter	
74-80	1500
81-91	925
92-99	700
100	800
101-102	700
103	2400
➥Super-heroes start	
104	850
105-110	525
111-120	450
121-126	390
127	450
128	400
129-130	375
131-149	340
150-151	425
152	310
153	425
154	310
155	425
156	310
157	425
158	310
159	425
160	310
161	425
162	310
163	425
164-169	310
170-180	255
181-199	235
200	350
201-209	260
210	2400
➥1st Krypto	
211-220	200
221-246	170
247	4400
➥1st Legion	
248-255	130
256	525
257-259	125
260	500
➥Aquaman origin	
261-266	80
267	740
➥2nd Legion	
268	80
269	225
➥1st Aqualad	
270	80
271	225
➥Lex Luthor origin	
272-274	65
275	145
276-280	65
281	60
282	95
283	100
284	60
285-286	110
287-289	60
290	100
291-292	45
293	100
294	90
➥1st Mon-El Legion	
295-298	45
299	55
300	200
➥Legion	
301	70
302-305	55
306-323	45
324-339	40
340	45
341-345	40
346	60
347-350	40
➥1st White Witch	
351-352	50
353-355	35
356	30
357	60
358-366	30
367-372	25
373	22
374	30
375-377	22
378	45
379-380	22
381	60
➥Supergirl starts	
382-389	22
390	30
391-400	22
401-402	21
403	50
404-415	20
416	18
417-427	13
428	28
➥1st Black Orchid	
429-430	15
431	28
➥Aparo Spectre	
432-433	15
434-435	12
436-441	10
442-447	6
448-458	5
459-460	4
461	6
462	7
463-479	4
480-503	3
Adventures of Superman DC, 1987	
0-424	3
425	4
426	3
427-462	2
463	3
464-465	2
466	3
467-479	2
480	3
481-495	2
496-498	3
499	5
500	3
500/Collector's	4
500/Silver	10
501-505	2
505/Variant	3
506-549	2
550	4
551-599	2
600	4
601-623	2

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

Amazing Spider-Man #37 (478) ★★★½



© Marvel

Marvel
Jan 2002 • 22 pp.
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Kaare Andrews

"Interlude"

While Aunt May tries to come to grips with the secrets she's learned, Peter Parker wrestles with his own moral dilemma.

J. Michael Straczynski skillfully ties Aunt May's contemplations to Peter Parker's own musings and recollections to make what could have easily been a public-service announcement about the evils of drugs into a riveting tale.

Putting Peter back at Midtown High, this time as a science teacher, is a great bit of character development — as is what's happening with Aunt May. Next issue should be even better, with May and Peter having a little talk about secrets.

CGC copy: 9.8 — Then $2.25 NOW $5

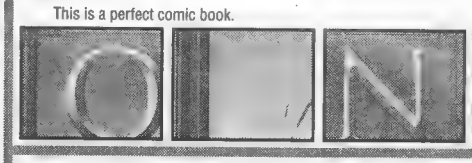
Do-It-Yourself Grading

While **CGC** keeps its grading standards private, these are the **traditional** condition definitions...

Mint

Abbreviated: **M**

This is a perfect comic book.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 10.0 grade.**

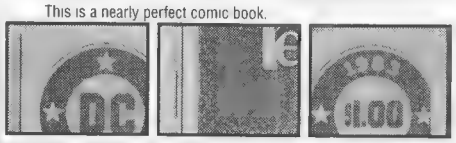
Its cover has full luster, with edges sharp and pages like new. There are no signs of wear or aging. It is not imperfectly printed or off-center.

Occasionally referred to as "Gem Mint," a term used by sportscard dealers.

Near Mint

Abbreviated: **NM**

This is a nearly perfect comic book.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 9.4 grade.**

Its cover shows barely perceptible signs of wear.

Its spine is tight, and its cover has only minor loss of luster and only minor printing defects. Some discoloration is acceptable in older comics — as are signs of aging.

Very Fine

Abbreviated: **VF**

A **Very Fine** copy has beginning signs of wear.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 8.0 grade.**

There can be slight creases and wrinkles at the staples, but it is a flat, clean issue with definite signs of being read a few times.

There is some loss of the original gloss, but it is in general an attractive comic book

Fine

Abbreviated: **F, Fn**

A **Fine** comic book is a good-looking copy ... at first glance.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 6.0 grade.**

This comic book's cover is worn but flat and clean with no defacement. There is usually no writing on the cover or tape repair.

Stress lines around the staples and more rounded corners are permitted.

Very Good

Abbreviated: **VG**

A **Very Good** comic book is well-read and has some problems.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 4.0 grade.**

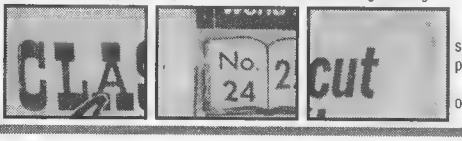
Most of the original gloss is gone There are minor markings, discoloration, and/or heavier stress lines around the staples and spine.

The cover may have minor tears and/or corner creases, and spine-rolling is generally permissible.

Good

Abbreviated: **G, Gd**

A **Good** copy is a very worn comic book with nothing missing.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 2.0 grade.**

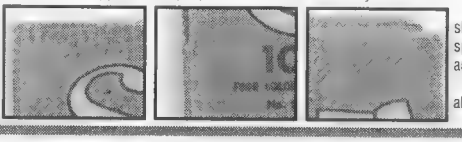
Creases, minor tears, rolled spine, and cover flaking are generally permissible in this grade.

Older Golden Age comic books often come in this condition

Fair

Abbreviated: **FA, Fr.**

A **Fair** copy has multiple problems but is structurally intact.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 1.0 grade.**

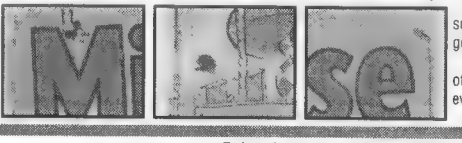
Copies may have a soiled, slightly damaged cover, a badly rolled spine, cover flaking, corners gone, and tears.

Tape may be present and is always considered a defect.

Poor

Abbreviated: **P, Pr**

A **Poor** copy is damaged and generally unsuitable for collecting.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 0.5 grade.**

While the copy may still contain some readable stories, major defects get in the way.

Copies may be in the process of disintegrating and may do so with even light handling.

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
624	5
625	4
625/2nd	3
626	2
627-635	3
636	5
➥Identity Crisis tie	
637	4
638	3
639	5
640-641	4
642	6
643	12
644-648	3
649	10
1000000	2
Ann 1	4
Ann 2-6	3
Ann 7-9	4

Albedo
THOUGHTS & IMAGES, 1984

0	8
0/A	30
0/B	15
1	14
1/A	10
2	250
➥1st Usagi Yojimbo	
3	10
4-5	4
6-8	3
9-14	2

All-American Comics
DC, 1939

1	5700
2	2000
3	1400
4-5	1250
6-7	980
8	1800
9-10	950
11	1025
12-15	950
16	72000
➥1st Green Lantern	
17	15600
➥2nd Green Lantern	
18	8800
19	13800
➥1st Atom	
20	4850
21-23	2000
24	2200
➥1st Mid-Nite, Sargon	
25	8300
➥Dr Mid-Nite origin	
26	3000
➥Sargon origin	
27	3500
28-30	1250
31-40	1040
41-50	785
51-60	675
61	4400
➥1st Solomon Grundy	
62-70	600
71-88	550
89	1200
➥1st Harlequin	
90	775
91-99	525
100	850
101	1000
➥Scarce	
102	1650
➥Scarce	

All-American Western
DC, 1948

103	375
104	265
105-110	225
111-120	165
121-126	110

All-Flash
DC, 1941

1	12500
➥Flash origin	
2	2400
3-4	1600
5-10	1100
11-15	850
16-20	800
21-32	625

All New Collectors' Edition
DC, 1977

C-53	26
➥Rudolph	
C-54	12
➥Supes v WWoman	
C-55	15
➥Legion	
C-56	40
➥Superman vs. Ali	
C-58	12
➥Supes vs. Shazam	
C-60	20
➥Rudolph's Summer	
C-62	12
➥Superman movie	

All Star Batman and Robin Boy Wonder
DC, 2005

1/Both	5
1/Special	4
1/RRP	150
2/Both	4
3/Both	3

All-Star Comics
DC, 1940

1	10000
2	3500
3	25000
➥1st JSA	
4	3000
5	2800
➥1st Hawkgirl	
6-7	1800
8	16000
➥1st Wonder Woman	
9-11	1600
12-15	1400
16-25	1200
26-32	900
33	1800
➥Grundy appearance	
34-35	900
36	1300
➥Batmn, Supes app.	
37	900
38	975
➥Black Canary starts	
39-49	900
50	975
➥Frazetta art	
51-56	900
57	1200
➥25-year hiatus starts	
58	12
➥1st Power Girl	
59-61	6
62	8
63	6
64-65	7
66	8
67-68	6
69	10
70-73	6
74	8

All-Star Squadron
DC, 1981

1	4
2-10	2
11-46	1
47	3
48-67	1
Ann 1	2
Ann 2-3	1

All-Star Superman
DC, 2006

1-5	3

All-Star Western
DC, 1970

1	30
2-3	15
4-5	14
6-9	9
10	260
➥1st Jonah Hex	
11	75

All-Winners Comics
TIMELY, 1941

1	16000
➥Cap America starts	
2	4800
3	2850
4	2800
5-6	2100
7-10	1800
11-18	1275
19	3350
21	3500
➥Scarce	

All-Winners Comics
TIMELY, 1948

1	1800

Alpha Flight
MARVEL, 1983

1	5
➥1st Marrina, Puck	
2-10	4
11-19	3
20-24	2
25-27	1
28	3
29-32	2
33	6

Robin Hood cover — Painted cover — Viking Prince origin — 1st Suicide Squad

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
APR 57	JUN 57	SEP 57	NOV 57	JAN 58	MAR 58	MAY 58	JUL 58	SEP 58	NOV 58	JAN 59	MAR 59	MAY 59	JUL 59	SEP 59	NOV 59
$400	$400	$400	$400	$400	$400	$400	$400	$400	$400	$400	$400	$500	$350	$500	$325

Guardians #1

Guardians is a solid concept, set in a super-hero universe, and writer Chris Callahan wastes no time in having the main villain trash The White House, kill a bunch of people, and initiate his plan. His villain's decisiveness and lots of people getting killed will draw some readers into the story, and the political angle tied the story into fighting modern-day terrorism. Some of the issue does rely on stereotypes: the villain with the costume and the cape (why?) and the team of super-heroes run by the government (why?). Callahan gives a tantalizing glimpse into a universe that might have answers to those questions. Additionally, the villain fights efficiently and ruthlessly. There's no delaying tactic used to stretch out the story.

HB STUDIOS
WRITER:
CHRIS CALLAHAN
ARTIST:
MICHAEL WATKINS
COLOR • 24 PGS.
$3.50

If Michael Watkins could get help on the art and/or beef up his own skills, people could really get into this story — if Callahan can maintain the ruthless pace.

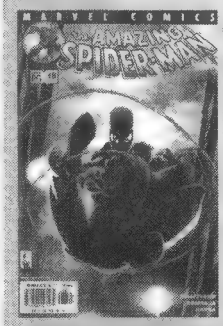
This is one to watch.

★★½ — Tony DiGerolamo

www.indieasylum.com

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Alpha Flight CONTINUED	
34	3
35-45	2
46	3
47 ➥1st Jim Lee at Marvel	4
48-53	2
54	3
55-56	2
57-74	1
75-105	2
106 ➥Northstar outed	3
107-130	2
Ann 1	4
Ann 2	1
Special 1	3
Amazing Adult Fantasy MARVEL, 1961	
7	600
8	475
9-13	425
14	525
Amazing Adventures MARVEL, 1970	
1	30
2-3	20
4-5	14
6	20
7	14
8	22
9-10	20
11 ➥1st blue Beast	150
12-13	30
14	25
15-17	20
18	14
19-25	5
26-28	4
29	5
30-36	3
36/30¢	20
37	8
37/30¢	20
38-39	3
Amazing Fantasy MARVEL, 1962	
15 ➥1st Spider-Man	32000
16-18	5
Amazing Spider-Man MARVEL, 1963	
-1	3
1 ➥1st Chameleon	27000
1/Golden	200
2 ➥1st Vulture	3400
3 ➥1st Dr. Octopus	4600
4 ➥1st Sandman	2300
5 ➥Dr. Doom app.	2500
6	1650
➥1st Lizard	
7	1100
8	800
9 ➥1st Electro	1025
10	990
11	1900
12	825
13 ➥1st Mysterio	1200
14 ➥1st Green Goblin	2050
15 ➥1st Kraven	1800
16-17 ➥2nd Green Goblin	800
18 ➥1st Ned Leeds	510
19	460
20-21	510
22	425
23	510
24-25	500
26	550
27	500
28	450
29-30	240
31	325
32	175
33	140
34	240
35-36	225
37	250
38	195
39 ➥1st Romita Spidey	350
40 ➥Goblin origin	375
41 ➥1st Rhino	300
42 ➥1st view of MJ	185
43	120
44	175
45	115
46 ➥1st Shocker	250
47	105
48	120
49	125
50 ➥Spidey quits	625
51	200
52	150
53	105
54-55	110
56	90
57	80
58	100
59	70
60	105
61	72
62	75
63 ➥vs. both Vultures	160
64	60
65	55
66 ➥1st Randy	80
67-68	60
69	75
70-71	70
72	85
73	50
74	80
75-77	65
78	70
79-80	60
81	55
82-83	50
84-85	55
86	60
87	75
88	60
89	70
90	75
91	50
92	62
93	80
94	65
95	52
96	85
97	72
98	80
99	60
100	100
101	130
102 ➥Morbius origin	105
103	50
104	90
105	25
106	40
107-108	27
109-110	30
111	34
112	30
113	35
114	50
115	33
116	22
117	25
118 ➥vs. Hulk	22
119-120 ➥vs. Hulk	50
121-122 ➥Green Goblin dies	150
123	35
124	42
125	30
126	18
127	25
128	20
129 ➥1st Punisher	225
129/Ace	6
130	20
131 ➥Uncle Doc Ock	25
132	22
133	16
134 ➥2nd Punisher	28
135	45
136 ➥Harry as Goblin II	60
137	25
138	15
139	19
140	17
141	15
142	18
143	15
144	17
145-146	15
147	14
148	25
149 ➥Spider-clone dies	27
150	16
151	24
152	11
153-154	10
155	12
155/30¢	20
156	12
156/30¢	20
157	12
157/30¢	40
158	10
158/30¢	20
159 ➥vs Doc Ock	11
159/30¢	20
160	9
161	12
162	11
163	10
164	12
165-166	9
167-168	7
169	10
169/35¢	15
170	7
170/35¢	15
171	7
171/35¢	15
172	8
172/35¢	15
173	18
173/35¢	25
174-175	10
176-177 ➥1st Hamilton Goblin	12
178-180	11
181	9
182	8
183	7
184	8
185	7
186-187	8
188	7
189	6
190	7
191-193	6
194 ➥1st Black Cat	21
195	10
196-198	6
199	7
200	10
201	9
202	7
203	6
204	8
205-206	6
207	5
208-211	6
212-218	5
219-220	6
221-222	4
223	5
224-225	4
226	7
227	6
228	4
229	11
230-232	6
233	4
234	6
235	4
236-237	5
238 ➥1st Hobgoblin	22
239	10
240	5
241	4
242	5
243	6
244-245	5
246-248	4
249	5
250-251	6
252 ➥1st black costume	10
253-254	5
255-258	4
259-263	5
264-265	4
266-267	3
268-270	4
271	5
272-273	4
274-276	5
277-279	4
280-284	5
285	6
286	4
287	5
288-289	6
290-293	5
294-295	6
296	5
297	6
298 ➥McFarlane starts	16
299 ➥Venom cameo	9
300 ➥1st Venom	35
301	6
302	4
303	5
304-307	4
308	5
309	4
310-313	5
314	4
315-316	5
317-318	6
319	5
320	3
321	4
322	5
323	3
324	5
325-327	4
328	5
329	4
330-343	3
344	4
345-347	3
348-353	2
354	3
355-357	2
358	6
359	2
360	3
361 ➥1st Carnage	6
362 ➥2nd Carnage	25
363	4
364	3
365	4
366-369	2
370	3
371-373	2
374	3
375	5
376	4
377	3
378	4
379	5
380	3
381	4
382-388	3
388/Variant	2
389-394	3
394/Variant	4
395-399	3
400 ➥no overlay	5
400/Gray ➥gray overlay	6
400/White ➥white overlay	30

RETROVIEW
Amazing Spider-Man #38 (479) ★★★★



Marvel
Feb 2002 • 22 pp.
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Kaare Andrews

Best CGC copy: **9.8**

"The Conversation"

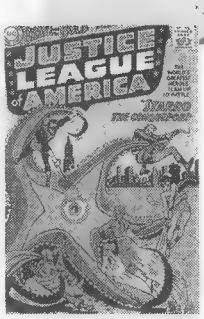
Aunt May confronts Peter with the secrets she's learned, and he discovers that she's been keeping a secret, too.

Next to #36 (477), this is probably the most moving issue of Amazing Spider-Man in years. For nearly his entire career, Peter has been worried that the shock of learning his secret identity would kill Aunt May. When she's written properly, however, Aunt May comes off as tough and determined, not frail and helpless, and that's the Aunt May J. Michael Straczynski presents here.

The secret May's been keeping from Peter all these years is also important to Spider-Man.

© Marvel

Then $2.25 NOW $4



▲ #28

The Brave and the Bold

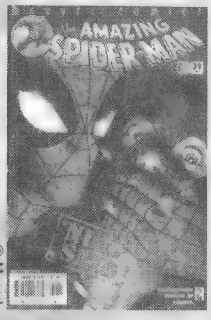
First appearances abound

The Brave and the Bold #25 marked the beginning of the series' trend toward first appearances of vairous DC characters. Like sister publication *Showcase*, *B&B* was used as a try-out title for many characters who went on to their own series, including The Justice League in #28.

image © 1960 DC Comics

	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
	1st Justice League of America	JLA		JLA; 1st Amazo	1st Cave Carson	Cave Carson	Cave Carson	1st Hawkman	Hawkman	Hawkman
	JAN 60	MAR 60	MAY 60	JUL 60	SEP 60	NOV 60	JAN 61	MAR 61	MAY 61	JUL 61
NM Price	$330	$5000	$2000	$1750	$350	$200	$200	$1750	$400	$400

Amazing Spider-Man #39 (480) ★★★



© Marvel

Marvel
May 2002 • 22 pp.
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Kaare Andrews

"Meanwhile ..."

In an issue bereft of dialogue, Mary Jane's life moves forward and Aunt May continues to deal with the secrets she's learned.

This was one of the better issues in Marvel's " 'Nuff Said" month, where the characters had to do their thing without the benefit of dialogue or caption boxes to explain what was going on.

J. Michael Straczynski does a fine job of this, although allowing the readers to learn some of what was going on by the text on a computer that Aunt May was using could almost be considered a cheat. However, it works and moves events forward. A portion of the script at the end was a good extra.

Near CBG copy: **9.8** — **Then $2.25 NOW $3**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
401-432	2
432/Variant	5
433-441	2
500	5
501	4
502	3
503-509	2
509/DirCut	7
➥Director's Cut	
510	4
511	3
512	5
513	3
514-520	2
521-528	3
529	15
530	12
531	10
532	12
533-535	3
Ann 1	700
➥1st Sinister Six	
Ann 2	550
Ann 3	140
Ann 4	90
Ann 5	75
Ann 6-7	35
Ann 8-9	22
Ann 10-12	8
Ann 13	7
Ann 14	6
Ann 15	7
Ann 16	5
Ann 17-21	4
➥Spidey marries	
Ann 21/Direct	5
Ann 22	5
Ann 23-25	3
Ann 26	4
Ann 27-28	3
Ann 1996	4
Ann 1997	3
Ashcan 1	1

Amazing Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1999

1 (442)	7
1/DF Romita	12
1/DF Lee	35
1/DF	5
1/Authentix	8
1/Sunburst	18
2	3
3-11	2
12	3
13-17	2
18-19	3
20	5
21-24	2
25	3
25/Speckle	4
26-29	2
30	5
➥Straczynski starts	
31	3
32-33	4
34	5
35	4
36	9
36/DF	20
➥9/11 issue	
37	5
38	4
39	3
40	2
41	4
42-43	3
44-49	2
50	6
51-56	2
57-58	3
Ann 1999	5
Ann 2000	4
Ann 2001	3

America's Best Comics
NEDOR, 1942

1	1600
2	850
3	600
4-6	440
7	575
8-10	400
11-20	360
21-24	325
25-31	265

America's Greatest Comics
FAWCETT, 1941

1	1900
2	900
3	675
4-5	500
6-8	450

Animal Comics
DELL, 1942

1	900
2	450
3	340
4	150
5	300
6-7	135
➥War bonds cover	
8-10	225
11-15	170
16-20	130
21-25	105
26-30	80

Animal Man
DC, 1988

1	4
2	3
3-49	2
50	3
51-55	2
56	4
57-89	2
Ann 1	4

Annihilation
MARVEL, 2006

1-2	3

Ant
ARCANA, 2004

1	10
1/Red foil	35
2-3	5
3/Variant	6

Ant
IMAGE, 2005

1	5
1/Sketch	3
1/RRP	20
1/Conv	15
2	0
3-8	3

Anthro
DC, 1968

1	50
2-6	20

Aquaman
DC, 1962

1	900
2	275
3-5	150
6-10	90
11	125
➥1st Mera	
12-17	75
18	90
➥Weds Mera	
19-28	60
29	75
➥1st Ocean Master	
30	50
31	45
32	50
33-34	45
35-41	40
42-43	30
44-46	25
47	40
48-49	25
50	75
51	50
52	40
53-58	20
59-63	10

Archie
ARCHIE, 1942

1	12200
2	3325
3	2175
4	1100
5	1000
6	740
7-9	660
10	585
11-15	475
16-20	400
21-24	325
25-30	275
31-35	220
36-40	175
41-50	125
51-60	110
61-70	70
71-80	56
81-90	44
91-99	34
100	55
101-120	22
121-140	16
141-150	13
151-180	9
181-200	5
201-250	3
251-569	2
Ann 1	1350
Ann 2	660
Ann 3	475
Ann 4	345
Ann 5	285
Ann 6	180
Ann 7	160
Ann 8	135
Ann 9	120
Ann 10	110
Ann 11	70
Ann 12	60
Ann 13	58
Ann 14-15	50
Ann 16-17	26
Ann 18-19	22
Ann 20	14
Ann 21-22	9
Ann 23-26	8

Army at War
DC, 1978

1	10

Army of Darkness
DARK HORSE, 1992

1	12
2-3	9

Arrgh!
MARVEL, 1974

1	15
2	4
3-5	3

Astonishing Tales
MARVEL, 1970

1	40
2-5	20
6	12
7-8	15
9	10
10	20
11	10
12	30
➥Man-Thing story	
13-20	10
21	25
22	10
23	15
24	10
25	25
➥1st Deathlok	
26	10
27-29	7
30-32	5
33	10
34	6
35	7
➥Low distribution	
35/30¢	20
36	10
➥Low distribution	
36/30¢	20

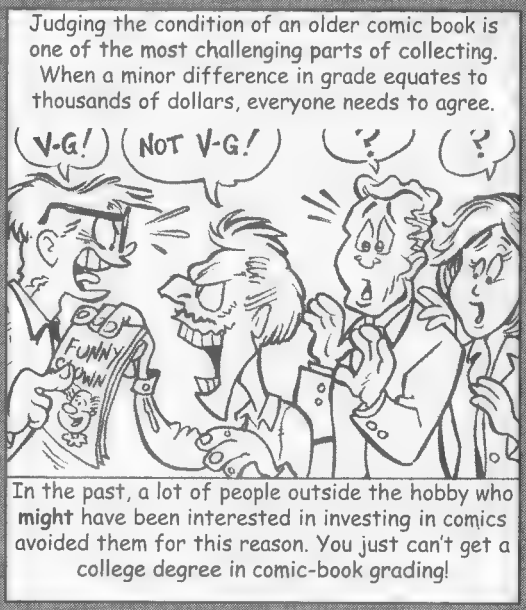
Astonishing X-Men
MARVEL, 2004

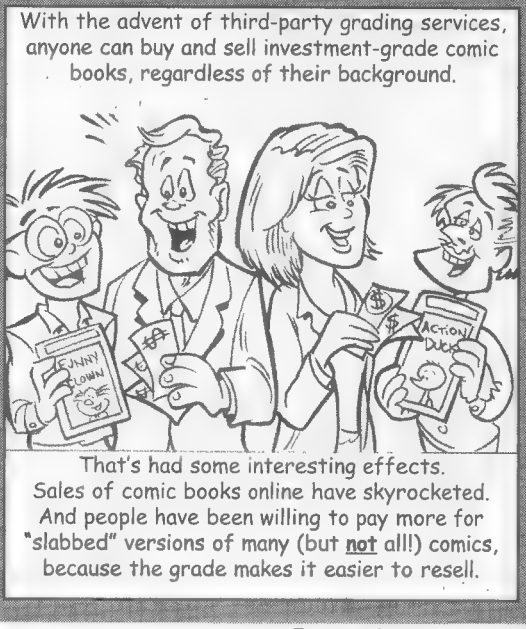
1	8
➥Whedon starts	
1/Cassaday	45
1/Del Otto	12
1/DirCut	5
1/DF	8
2	16
3	4
4	8
4/Variant	25
➥Colossus cover	
5	8
6	5
7	4
8-10	3
10/Variant	5
11-17	3

Astro Boy
GOLD KEY, 1965

1	265

The Basics





Suicide Squad	Suicide Squad	Suicide Squad	Cave Carson	Cave Carson	Hawkman	Origin of Hawkman	Hawkman	Strange Sports Stories; Carmine Infantino art					Team-ups begin	Aquaman, Hawkman	Sgt. Rock
37 SEP 61	38 NOV 61	39 JAN 62	40 MAR 62	41 MAY 62	42 JUL 62	43 SEP 62	44 NOV 62	45 JAN 63	46 MAR 63	47 MAY 63	48 JUL 63	49 SEP 63	50 NOV 63	51 JAN 64	52 MAR 64
NM $250	$225	$225	$140	$140	$300	$350	$260	$80	$80	$80	$80	$50	$175	$225	$125

Hero Street #1

This is another comic book in which super-heroes are common; they live in a neighborhood called Hero Street. The issue is difficult to read and the lighthearted visual gags are hard to make out. Artist Federico Zumel needs to cut back on the cross-hatching. This is a super-hero comic and needs to be in color, plain and simple. How does it make "fantastic" characters seem fantastic by creating an entire street where dozens of them live?

HEROSTREET PRESS
WRITER:
ERIC MILLER
ARTISTS:
VARIOUS
B/W • 24 Pgs.
$2.50

A team of super-heroes is called to take down a super-powered fugitive. For some reason, a regular cop is able to capture this guy in the beginning, but later they need the team for some reason. It's not clear why the super-powered fugitive gave up. After being in jail a short time, he just smashes through the wall to get out.

The whole concept of a street full of super-heroes is reminiscent of that scene from *The Tick* in which there are so many super-heroes in New York City they can only fight crime for 15 minutes at a specific block before they have to go home to give the area to the next crime-fighting team. It's ridiculous. If *Hero Street* wants to do comedy (this issue is called "Groaners"), *The Tick* set the bar.

½★ — Tony DiGerolamo

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Atom DC, 1962	
1	750
2	300
3	225
4-5	175
6	125
7 ➥Hawkman app.	250
8	125
9	90
10-13	85
14 ➥Hawkman app	95
15	85
16-17	45
18	50
19	45
20	60
21-23	35
24	40
25	50
26-28	35
29	100
30	55
31	48
32	35
33	40
34-35	35
36-37	45
38	30
Special 1-2	3
Atom and Hawkman DC, 1968	
39-41	30
42	35
43-45	30
Avengers MARVEL, 1963	
0	3
1 ➥1st Avengers	4200
1.5	3
2	935
3	750
4 ➥Cap. America joins	1450
4/Golden	40
5	350
6	390
7	460
8	275
9 ➥1st Wonder Man	225
10	180
11 ➥Spider-Man app.	275
12	115
13-14	150
15	100
16	125
17	115
18	100
19	150
20	80
21-22	70
23	75
24	70
25	95
26	65
27	70
28-30	50
31	43
32	37
33	50
34	55
35	50
36	35
37	40
38	43
39-41	40
42	50
43	45
44	40
45	50
46	30
47-48	37
49	32
50	30
51	40
52	41
53 ➥X-Men app.	60
54-55	30
56	50
57 ➥1st Vision	110
58	65
59-60	40
61-66	30
67	45
68	27
69-70	30
71	50
72-73	30
74-76	25
77	20
78	25
79-81	23
82	26
83 ➥1st Valkyrie	36
84	23
85-86	25
87	40
88	25
89	20
90-91	22
92	26
93 ➥Double-size	120
94	35
95	38
96	35
97-98	26
99	30
100 ➥Knight gets sword	55
101	18
102	16
103 ➥Sentinels	40
104	20
105	18
106	17
107	20
108	12
109	18
110	25
111	22
112	25
113	11
114	15
115	13
116 ➥Defenders War	27
117	20
118	24
119	15
120	14
121	10
122	13
123	9
124	12
125	20
126	18
127-129	12
130	12
131	12
132	10
133	8
134-135	10
136-137	8
138-140	7
141	10
142-145	8
146	10
146/30¢	20
147	7
147/30¢	20
148	12
148/30¢	18
149	6
149/30¢	15
150	7
150/30¢	15
151	7
152-155	6
156	9
157	6
158-159	8
160	6
160/35¢	15
161	7
161/35¢	15
162	8
162/35¢	15
163	7
163/35¢	15
164	6
164/35¢	15
165-166	6
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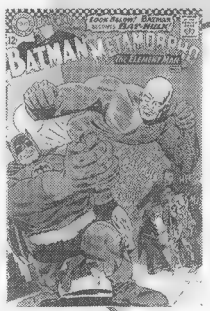
169-170	4
171	6
172-174	4
175	5
176-180	4
181	5
182	4
183-184	6
185	7
186	5
187-189	6
190	4
191-195	5
196	7
197-199	5
200 ➥Double-size	9
201-218	3
219-224	2
225	3
226-249	2
250	3
251-262	2
263	3
264-349	2
350	3
351-359	1
360	3
361-362	1
363	3
364-365	1
366 ➥Foil cover	4
367-368	1
369	3
370-374	1
375	2
375/Collector's	3
376-379	2
379/Double	3
380	2
380/Double	3
381	2
381/Double	3
382	2
382/Double	3
383-399	2
400	4
401-402	3
Ann 1	125
Ann 2	120
Ann 3-4	22
Ann 5	25
Ann 6	7
Ann 7	12
Ann 8-9	8
Ann 10	9
Ann 11-16	4
Ann 17-23	3
Avengers MARVEL, 1996	
1-1/A	3
2-11	2
12	3
13	2
Avengers MARVEL, 1998	
0	2
1	4
1/Chromium	6
1/RoughCut	4
2-5	3
6-11	2
12	3
12/DF	12
12/White	5
13-16	2
16/A	4
17-24	2
25	3
26	2
27	3
28-33	2
34	3
35-47	2
48	4
49	2
50	3
51-80	2
81-82	3
83-84	2
500 ➥Disassembled	12
500/DirCut	18
501 ➥Disassembled	5
502 ➥Hawkeye dies	7
503	4
Ann '98	3
Ann '99-'00	4
Ann '01	3
Avengers Finale MARVEL, 2005	
1	4
Avengers Forever MARVEL, 1998	
1	3
1/WF	5
2-12	3
Avengers/ JLA DC, 2003	
2	7
4	6
Avengers West Coast MARVEL, 1989	
47-55	1
56 ➥Psycho Scarlet Witch	8
57-74	1
75	2
76-102	1
Ann 4-7	2
Ann 8	3
Batgirl DC, 2000	
1	4
1/2nd	3
2-5	4
6-73	3
Ann 1	4
Batman DC, 1940	
0	3
1 ➥1st Catwoman	80000
2	15000
3	9750
4	7500
5 ➥1st Batmobile	5500
6-7	4500
8	4000
9	3750
10	7500
11	4750
12 ➥1st Batcave	2900
13-14	2775

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM



▲ #68

The Brave and the Bold

A team-up tradition

Beginning in *The Brave and the Bold* #50 with the teaming of Green Arrow and The Martian Manhunter, the series began featuring team-ups in nearly every issue. With #67, the team-ups featured Batman and another DC hero in every issue.

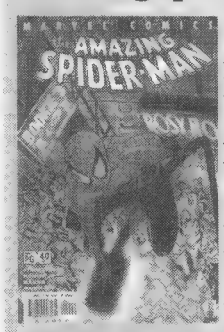
image © 1966 DC Comics

	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62
		Atom, Flash	1st Teen Titans	Metal Men, Atom	Flash, Manhunter	1st Meta-morpho	Meta-morpho	Batman, GL	Teen Titans	Starman, Black Canary
	MAY 64	JUL 64	SEP 64	NOV 64	JAN 65	MAR 65	MAY 65	JUL 65	SEP 65	NOV 65
NM Price	$75	$350	$45	$45	$150	$65	$80	$100	$125	$100

THE BOTTOM LINE

RETROVIEW

Amazing Spider-Man #40 (481) ★★★½



"Sensitive Issues"

Spider-Man faces The Shade, a new villain who's targeting drug users. Meanwhile, Aunt May and Mary Jane talk.

The ramifications of Aunt May's knowing Peter's secret are still being felt several issues later. Should she tell Mary Jane she knows? Or should Peter do it? While the story has a bit of a soap-opera feel, J. Michael Straczynski isn't exactly stringing readers along. It's all a logical progression.

The Shade looks to be an interesting villain. Operating beneath the radar of most Marvel heroes by targeting teen drug users, it falls to Spider-Man to stop him, as usual.

Marvel
Jun 2002 • 22 pp.
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Jason Pearson

Best CGC copy: **9.8**

Then $2.25 NOW $2

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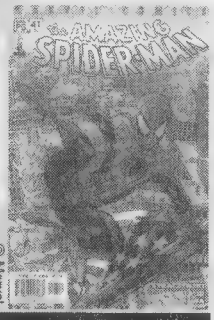
Amazing Spider-Man #41 (482) ★★★



© Marvel

Marvel • Jul 2002
Writers: J. Michael Straczynski, Ron Zimmerman
Pencils: John Romita Jr., Al Rio
Inks: Scott Hanna, Sandu Florea
Cover: Jason Pearson

"Looking Back" • 22 pp.

With the help of his police liaison, Spider-Man learns The Shade's origins.

As usual, J. Michael Straczynski introduces an idea to the series that writers should have been using all these years. In this case, it's sneaking Spider-Man into a mental institution to continue his investigations by disguising him in a trenchcoat. The tie to Straczynski's proposed Doctor Strange project work, but only just.

"You Can Call Me Al, Pt. 2" • 5 pp.

A teaser lead-in to *Spider-Man: Get Kraven*.

We know where this story continues, but where did it start?

Back CGC 2007: 9.8 **Then $2.25 NOW $4**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
15	2625
16	4600
➥1st Alfred	
17-20	1650
21-22	1275
23	2000
24	1275
25	2050
26-30	1275
31-36	950
37	1200
38	1000
39	950
40	1140
41-43	760
44	1080
45-46	760
47	3000
➥Batman origin	
48	965
49	1350
➥1st Mad Hatter	
50-51	690
52	850
53-54	690
55	850
56-57	690
58	750
59-61	690
62	1250
➥Catwoman origin	
63	575
64	515
65	575
66	660
➥vs. Joker	
67-68	515
69	575
70-72	515
73	660
74	550
75-77	500
78	585
79-80	500
81	485
82-83	435
84	485
85-90	435
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100	2000
➥Anniversary issue	
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105	490
106-109	400
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121	375
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123	220
124-126	195
127	240
➥vs. Joker	
128	195
129	250
➥Robin origin	
130	195
131	145
132-135	130
136	215
➥vs. Joker	
137-145	140
146-147	110
148	140
➥vs. Joker	
149-150	110
151	90
152	100
153	125
154	85
155	300
➥1st SA Penguin	
156-164	85
165	130
166-168	85
169	90
170	85
171	450
➥1st SA Riddler	
172	125
173-175	75
176	85
177	75
178	85
179	120
➥vs. Riddler	
180	60
181	175
➥1st Poison Ivy	
182-185	60
186	70
187	65
188	40
189	250
➥1st SA Scarecrow	
190	45
191	40
192	60
193	70
194	80
195-196	40
197	100
➥Catwoman app	
198	85
199	40
200	100
➥Robin origin	
201-202	35
203-204	30
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207-208	50
209-212	30
213	45
214-217	30
218	70
➥Giant-size	
219	50
220-221	30
222	75
223	40
224-226	30
227	50
228	40
229-231	30
232	350
➥1st Ra's al Ghul	
233	30
234	115
➥1st SA Two-Face	
235	17
236	25
237	75
➥1st Reaper	
238	65
➥100 pages	
239-240	17
241	30
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243	70
➥vs. Ra's al Ghul	
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➥vs Ra's al Ghul	
245	70
246-247	15
248	20
249-250	15
251	60
➥vs. Joker	
252	14
253	26
254-255	32
256-258	35
259-261	32
262-263	15
264-266	9
267-285	8
286	12
➥vs Joker	
287-290	9
291	12
292-294	9
295-299	8
300	15
301-331	7
332	8
333-352	7
353	5
354-356	7
357	9
358-367	7
368	8
369-370	6
371-399	5
400	10
401-403	4
404	5
405	6
406-408	5
409-416	3
417	5
418-420	4
421-425	3
426-427	6
427/Direct	4
428	6
429	4
430	3
431-435	2
436	3
437-441	2
442	3
443-456	2
457	3
457/Direct	4
458-486	2
487	1
488-492	3
492/Silver	5
493	3
494-496	2
497	3
498-500	2
500/Collector's	4
501-515	2
515/Variant	4
516-530	2
530/Variant	3
531	2
531/Variant	3
532	2
532/Variant	3
533-535	2
535/Variant	4
536-549	2
550	3
550/Variant	4
551-562	2
563-564	3
565-599	2

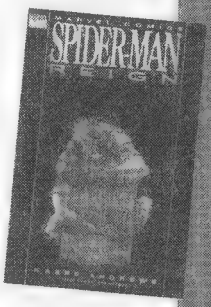
I've Been Slabbed!

Steve Mortensen, Colossus Comics

Lots of changes this year for Spider-Man. So far, there's been a new costume, picking the pro-registration side in "Civil War," revealing his identity, switching sides in "Civil War," his new costume destroyed, and now — in *Amazing Spider-Man* #539 — he switches back to his black costume. Switching back to black will be metaphoric for the black state of Spider-Man's life; apparently, something is going to happen to someone he loves — probably the death of Mary Jane or Aunt May. My guess is Aunt May, since Mary Jane and Peter haven't had kids yet, and Marvel has built into the future mythology the character of Mayday Parker (Spider-Girl). Last month, I mentioned that some good bets to pick up were early appearances of the black costume from the 1980s. The common issues are selling for about $50 in 9.8, while appearances of Venom and other villains are more. *Amazing Spider-Man* #260 (Jan 85), one of the classic Hobgoblin covers, sells for around $300 in 9.8, and *Amazing Spider-Man* #316 (Jun 89), a McFarlane Venom cover, sells for around $175 in 9.8. As the movie approaches, I would expect a spike in price of all these black-costume and early-Venom issues, especially since raw copies from the 1980s are hard to grade in 9.8.

I thought that Nightwing would take a turn as Batman in *52* #30 but I was wrong. Robin mentioned to Nightwing that the two of them could be the next Dynamic Duo, but it was only in passing conversation. This may be foreshadowing — a possible changing of the guard at some point? Not sure if that would be well received but it would certainly shake things up at DC.

This month's 9.8 picks:



***Spider-Man Reign* #1 (both covers).** This one could have been titled "Spider-Man The Dark Knight Returns." I really enjoyed the comic and the art is great. Make sure that you handle this very carefully because of the black, glossy cover. I actually pulled mine out of the box using a tissue so as to not get fingerprints on it. A second printing has been announced, but I think the black-costume cover is the cover that most collectors will want in 9.8.

***Blade* #5.** Wolverine vs. Blade in a "Civil War" tie-in issue. The cover is morbidly cool, with Blade's face on the cover with a smirk — and Wolverine's fist under his chin, with his claws piercing the crown of Blade's head. Should make for an interesting fight, perhaps setting the stage for future bouts.

***Amazing Spider-Man* #539.** The official return of the black costume and whatever changes that brings with it. We have been taking preorders for this book in 9.8 because of its significance and because the painted cover looks great. Many of my customers have been asking me if I think that #529 will drop in value after #539 comes out. Initially, there may be a drop in price with #529, but, since the story of #529 is linked to #539 through "Civil War," I think the book in the long term will stay solid. #529 is basically the beginning of "Civil War" and the first step toward Peter Parker revealing his identity. Also, *Civil War* #2 sketch covers have been a bargain on eBay at $150 to $200 for 9.8s. I think over the long term that will also be a great issue to have.

***Ultimate Spider-Man* #104.** The record-setting issue for Brian Michael Bendis and Mark Bagley that matches the duo of Lee and Kirby on Fantastic Four. Marvel is doing a 1:50 variant and a 1:100 white variant. We plan to presell those at $250 and $500. It's a gamble preselling Ultimate Spider-Man, since some of the issues have had severe spine damage from the bindery.

***Steve Mortensen** owns Colossus Comics (**www.colossuscomics.com**), which offers a CGC 9.8 subscription service and CGC 9.8 preorders for new comics, as well as eBay auctions and an extensive online store. He can be reached at **steve@colossuscomics.com**.*

	Supergirl, Wonder Woman	Eclipso	Doom Patrol	Metamorpho, Metal Men	Batman, Flash	Meta-morpho	Green Lantern	Hawkman	Green Arrow	Spectre	Aquaman, Atom	Metal Men	Spectre	Plastic Man	Atom	Wonder Woman, Batgirl
	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78
	JAN 66	MAR 66	MAY 66	JUL 66	SEP 66	NOV 66	JAN 67	MAR 67	MAY 67	JUL 67	SEP 67	NOV 67	JAN 68	MAR 68	MAY 68	JUL 68
NM	$40	$60	$22	$22	$65	$80	$50	$50	$50	$50	$50	$40	$60	$50	$40	$40

Kami-kaze Vol. 1

High-schooler Misao has had a hard life as an orphan who lives in a Tokyo convent. But it gets worse, when she discovers her past as the Girl of Water, one of five elemental forces from the mythic race Kegai No Tami. According to legend, her blood can free the 88 beasts who've been imprisoned an eon and ensure the survival of the Vacuum, Wind, and Fire clans. So the mysterious Kaede hires assassins to capture her to destroy humanity.

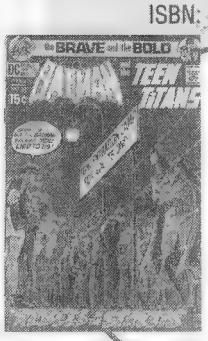
TOKYOPOP
WRITER:
SHIKI SATOSHI
ARTIST:
SHIKI SATOSHI
B/W • 264 Pgs.
$9.99

Luckily, the invincible fifth warrior, the moody "Earth" swordsman Kamuro, protects Misao and wins her trust, as she taps her power under duress. But, as the fiery Higa defeats Kamuro and spirits away his sweet prize, will the windy Sakurai remain an enemy or a friend?

This script is like Clamp's *X/1999* but is more explicitly violent and sexual with constant collateral damage among innocent bystanders. As an anime character designer, Shiki Satoshi wields impressive illustrative control, but his setup seems to be an excuse to titillate the libidos and bloodlust of young male readers.

★★ **— Oliver Chin**

www.tokyopop.com
ISBN: 1-59532-924-2



▲ #94

The BRAVE and the BOLD

Relevant issues

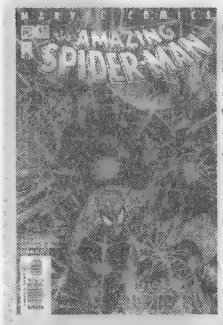
At about the same time the "relevancy" issues of *Green Lantern* began in 1970, Batman's team-ups in *The Brave and the Bold* also attempted to address social issues of the day, often with the help of The Teen Titans or The Metal Men.

image © 1971 DC Comics

THE BOTTOM LINE

	Dead-man	Creeper	Flash	Aquaman	Teen Titans	Sgt. Rock	Green Arrow	Deadman	Wonder Woman	Wildcat
	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88
	SEP 68	NOV 68	JAN 69	MAR 69	MAY 69	JUL 69	SEP 69	NOV 69	JAN 70	MAR 70
NM Price	$75	$50	$50	$50	$60	$50	$60	$50	$26	$20

RETROVIEW
Amazing Spider-Man #42 (483) ★★★



"A Strange Turn of Events"

Spider-Man's confrontation with The Shade on the astral plane interferes with Peter Parker's reunion with Mary Jane.

Just when readers think Peter Parker's life can't get any worse, along comes more interference from his Spider-Man side.

J. Michael Straczynski shows that he knows how to write Doctor Strange, but footnoting a mini-series that hasn't even been written yet is a bit of a stretch.

The final few pages of the issue leave fans (or at least this reader) yelling at the pages for Mary Jane to realize that Peter tried his best.

Marvel
Aug 2002 • 22 pp.
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Jason Pearson

9.8 **Then $2.25 NOW $3**

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Batman CONTINUED
600 . . . 4
601-607 . . . 2
608 . . . 5
➥Jim Lee begins
609 . . . 4
610-619/2nd . . 3
620-629 . . . 2
630 . . . 3
631-632 . . . 2
633 . . . 3
634 . . . 6
635 . . . 15
➥Red Hood
636-637 . . . 12
638 . . . 11
638/2nd . . . 6
639 . . . 16
640-641 . . . 6
642-643 . . . 3
644 . . . 2
645-650 . . . 3
651 . . . 6
652-657 . . . 3
1000000 . . . 4
Ann 1 . . . 540
Ann 2 . . . 275
Ann 3 . . . 215
Ann 4-5 . . . 110
Ann 6-7 . . . 85
Ann 8 . . . 7
Ann 9-11 . . . 6
Ann 12-13 . . . 5
Ann 14-15 . . . 3
Ann 15/Silver . . . 4
Ann 16-18 . . . 3
Ann 19 . . . 4
Ann 20 . . . 3
Ann 21 . . . 4
Ann 22-23 . . . 3
Ann 24 . . . 4
Ann 25 . . . 12
GS 1-3 . . . 6

Battlestar Galactica MARVEL, 1979
1 . . . 4
4-10 . . . 3
11-23 . . . 2

Beatles DELL, 1964
1 . . . 440

Beowulf DC, 1975
1 . . . 5
2 . . . 3
3-6 . . . 2

Beware (Trojan) TROJAN, 1953
13 (1) . . . 400
14 (2) . . . 250
15 (3)-16 (4) 200
5-13 . . . 175
14-15 . . . 150

Beware MARVEL, 1973
1 . . . 8
2-8 . . . 5

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Beware the Creeper DC, 1968
1 . . . 45
2-5 . . . 32
6 . . . 55

Big All-American Comic Book DC, 1944
1 . . . 6500

Bionic Woman CHARLTON, 1977
1 . . . 14
2-5 . . . 6

Birds of Prey DC, 1999
1 . . . 4
2-7 . . . 3
8 . . . 12
➥Nightwing app.
9-75 . . . 3
76 . . . 15
➥1st Black Alice
77-98 . . . 3

Black Goliath MARVEL, 1976
1 . . . 11
2 . . . 5
2/30¢ . . . 20
3 . . . 4
3/30¢ . . . 20
4 . . . 4
4/30¢ . . . 20
5 . . . 4

Blackhawk DC, 1944
9 . . . 2600
10 . . . 1100
11 . . . 900
12-15 . . . 800
16-20 . . . 525
21-25 . . . 460
26-30 . . . 400
31-35 . . . 350
36-40 . . . 300
41-49 . . . 225
50 . . . 200
51-60 . . . 165
61-70 . . . 145
71 . . . 200
72-80 . . . 130
81-86 . . . 125
87-92 . . . 120
93 . . . 135
94-99 . . . 110
100 . . . 140
101-107 . . . 105
108 . . . 325
➥1st DC issue
109 . . . 130
110-117 . . . 110
118 . . . 135
119-130 . . . 85
131-140 . . . 65
141-149 . . . 50
150-163 . . . 48
164 . . . 60
165-166 . . . 48
167-180 . . . 22
181-200 . . . 16
201-227 . . . 15
228 . . . 30
229-243 . . . 15
244-260 . . . 4
261-273 . . . 3

Blitzkrieg DC, 1976
1 . . . 16

UNSLABBED Near Mint

2 . . . 8
3-5 . . . 6

Bomba DC, 1967
1 . . . 16
2-7 . . . 8

Bone CARTOON BOOKS, 1991
1 . . . 80
2 . . . 45
3 . . . 25
4 . . . 16
5 . . . 12
6-8 . . . 7
9-13 . . . 5
13.5/Gold . . . 4
14-55 . . . 3
Special 1 . . . 2

Boy Comics LEV GLEASON, 1942
3 . . . 1500
4 . . . 1100
5 . . . 575
6 . . . 950
➥Iron Jaw origin
7 . . . 620
8 . . . 515
9 . . . 450
10 . . . 615
11-14 . . . 350
15 . . . 400
16 . . . 225
17 . . . 250
18-20 . . . 200
21-25 . . . 140
26-29 . . . 130
30 . . . 200
➥Crimebuster origin
31-40 . . . 58
41-50 . . . 42
51-62 . . . 30
63-80 . . . 27
81-100 . . . 24
101-119 . . . 22

Boy Commandos DC, 1942
1 . . . 4500
2 . . . 1500
3 . . . 1000
4-6 . . . 500

UNSLABBED Near Mint

7-10 . . . 275
11-22 . . . 190
23 . . . 220
24-30 . . . 150
31-35 . . . 135
36 . . . 195

Brave and the Bold DC, 1955
1 . . . 3000
2 . . . 1500
3 . . . 700
4-5 . . . 650
6-10 . . . 500
11-22 . . . 400
23 . . . 500
24 . . . 350
25 . . . 500
➥1st Suicide Squad
26 . . . 325
27 . . . 330
28 . . . 5000
➥1st JLA
29 . . . 2000
30 . . . 1750
31 . . . 350
32-33 . . . 200
34 . . . 1750
➥1st SA Hawkman
35-36 . . . 400
37 . . . 250
38-39 . . . 225
40-41 . . . 140
42 . . . 300
43 . . . 350
➥Hawkman origin
44 . . . 260
45-49 . . . 60
50 . . . 175
51 . . . 225
52 . . . 125
53 . . . 75
54 . . . 350
➥1st Teen Titans
55-56 . . . 45
57 . . . 150
➥1st Metamorpho
58 . . . 65
59 . . . 80
60 . . . 100
➥1st Wonder Girl
61 . . . 125
➥Starman origin
62 . . . 100
➥1st SA Wildcat
63 . . . 40
64 . . . 60

UNSLABBED Near Mint

65-66 . . . 22
67 . . . 65
➥Batman starts
68 . . . 80
➥Batman Hulk parody
69-73 . . . 50
74 . . . 40
75 . . . 60
76 . . . 50
77-78 . . . 40
79 . . . 75
➥Batman, Deadman
80-82 . . . 50
83 . . . 60
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➥N. Adams GA
86 . . . 50
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119-126 . . . 7
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129-130 . . . 11
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132 . . . 4
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134-140 . . . 4
141 . . . 10
142-179 . . . 4
180-190 . . . 3
191 . . . 8
192-196 . . . 3
197 . . . 4
198-199 . . . 3
200 . . . 7
Ann 1 . . . 6

Caliber Presents CALIBER, 1989
1 . . . 15
➥1st Crow
2-7 . . . 3
8 . . . 2
9-24 . . . 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Captain Action DC, 1968
1 . . . 45
2-4 . . . 35
5 . . . 20

Captain America MARVEL, 1968
100 . . . 210
101 . . . 55
102-108 . . . 35
109 . . . 45
➥Origin retold
110 . . . 75
➥Steranko begins
111 . . . 65
112 . . . 50
113 . . . 60
➥Avengers app
114-116 . . . 30
117 . . . 95
➥1st Falcon
118-124 . . . 25
125-127 . . . 20
128-130 . . . 15
131-132 . . . 18
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171-172 . . . 10
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174 . . . 12
175-176 . . . 10
177-183 . . . 8
184-187 . . . 5
188 . . . 8
189-196 . . . 6
196/30¢ . . . 20
197 . . . 5
197/30¢ . . . 20

Amazing Spider-Man #43 (484) ★★★½

© Marvel

"Cold Arms"

While a con man steals and upgrades Doctor Octopus' technology for his own ends, Peter and Aunt May travel to Hollywood to find Mary Jane.

Finally, J. Michael Straczynski has Peter take the bull by the horns and head west to confront MJ once and for all.

Straczynski also shows that, not only can he create new villains for Spider-Man to fight, he can work well with the longtime menaces, too. Doc Ock has always been an interesting villain, and here Straczynski makes him a sympathetic character. Can't wait to see what the new 10-armed villain is called.

Marvel
Sep 2002 • 22 pp.
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Romita Jr.

Hot CGC copy **9.8** Then $2.25 NOW $3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
198	6
198/30¢	20
199	5
199/30¢	20
200	6
200/30¢	20
201	6
202	4
203	5
204-205	4
206	5
207	4
208-209	5
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210/35¢	15
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211/35¢	15
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214	4
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215-233	4
234	6
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242-255	4
256-271	2
272	3
273-275	2
276	4
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285	2
286-288	3
289-297	2
298	3
299-331	2
332	3
333-349	2
350	3
351-382	2
383	3
384-399	2
400	3
401-420	2
420/Collector's	3
421-424	2
425	3
425/Variant	4
426-443	2
444	3
445-447	2
448	3
449-454	2
Ann 1	35
Ann 2	20
Ann 3-4	8
Ann 5-7	3
Ann 8 ➥Wolverine app.	12
Ann 9-13	3
Ashcan 1	1
Special 1-2	4

Captain America
MARVEL, 1995

1	3
1/Flag	4
1/Conv.	5
2-13	2
Ashcan 1	1

Captain America
MARVEL, 1998

1	4
1/Sunburst	5
2	3
2/Variant	4
3-12	2
12/Ltd.	6
13-24	2
25	3
26-49	2
50	6
Ann '98-'01	4

Captain America
MARVEL, 2005

1	8
2-3	5
4-5	3
6	7
6/Variant	5
7	3
8	5
9-22	3

Captain America & The Falcon
MARVEL, 2004

1-5	3
6	4
7-14	3

Captain America Comics
MARVEL, 1941

1	80000
2	20000
3	10000
4	6500
5	5500
6	4750
7	5500
8	4000
9-10	3600
11-12	3100
13	3275
14-15	3100
16	3600
17	2585
18-20	2075
21-22	1850
22/A ➥GS issue	12000
23-25	1850
26-30	1650
31-35	1385
36	1650
37	1550
38-40	1285
41-58	1175
59 ➥Cap origin	2650
60	1175
61	1850
62-65	1075
66	1400
67-70	1175
71-73	1025
74 ➥Cap Weird Tales	4350
75	2750
76-78	875

Captain Atom
CHARLTON, 1965

78	40
79-85	25
86-89	20

Captain Marvel
MARVEL, 1968

1	60
2-3	18
4	24
5	15
6	30
7-8	15
9	25
10-15	15
16	25
17-24 ➥Thanos War starts	22
25-27	25
28	30
29	16
30	12
31	16
32-33	12
34	6
35-37	3
38	5
39-44	3
44/30¢	20
45	3
45/30¢	20
46-47	3
48	9
49	3
50	10
51	4
52	3
52/35¢	15
53-54	3
55	5
56	3
57	6
58-62	3

Captain Marvel Advs.
FAWCETT, 1941

1	27500
2	3500
3	1800
4	1200
5	1050
6-7	750
8-10	675
11-15	590
16-17	550
18 ➥1st Mary Marvel	1800
19-20	500
21-22	400
23 ➥1st Mr. Mind	610
24-40	225
41	190
42	163
43-109	125
110-120	80
121 ➥Cap Marvel origin	115
122-150	80

CBG Trendwatcher

Michael Tierney, Collector's Edition

As I'd hoped, sales bounced back from the slump of October to better than the previous year's sales numbers with the shipment of *Civil War* #5 in November. But because of so much late shipping, the bloom is off the rose of *Civil War*'s demand, and some freeze damage is evident. *Civil War* sales have definitely declined but still remain strong. The only title that surprised me with better-than-expected sales was the crossover into *Black Panther* #22. In fact, when the reprint of *BP* #21 boasted a "Civil War" banner, my unsold first printings of that issue suddenly became hot. It's all a matter of packaging.

The sleeper hit of the last few weeks has been Marvel's release of *Laurell K. Hamilton's Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter*, the first two issues of which quickly sold out and went into a second printings. What made this title difficult to predict was that I'd had calls for what seemed like nearly a year from non-customers who were exclusively interested in this title. In the past, whenever a title is chronically late, as *Anita* was during the shift from DB Pro to Marvel, any previous anticipation fades to lack of interest — or you discover that those dozens of calls were all from one or two people. And then no one buys it whenever it does finally ship. But that wasn't the case with *Anita Blake*, as enthusiastic fans of vampiric literature showed up in unexpected numbers to sink their teeth into this title.

For DC, the series that took the hardest recent downturn in demand due to late shipping was the *Seven Soldiers* one-shot finale. The series had never done that well for my store and declined throughout the related title runs. When the finale finally shipped, hardly anyone bought it, and those who did were vocal in their disappointment. The whole "World Storm" storyline that's running through the WildStorm relaunches of old Image titles is suffering a similar fate.

It's to be hoped that the Big Two will recognize the damage done by late-shipping projects. With the volume that their titles sell, the effects are much more obvious with them than they are with independent publishers. Late-shipping projects have become so prevalent throughout the industry that it's a relief when an ambitious project like DC's *52* keeps plugging along, week after week. One week, Diamond accidentally shorted me at one store, shipping me copies of *Uncle Sam and the Freedom Fighters* by mistake. The looks of horror on my customers' faces when they couldn't find the newest issue were priceless — but not as priceless as their relief when they found out that it wasn't DC's fault. Diamond got my missing shipment to me the next day, and all was well.

But, while *52* continues to perform, there is an evident flaw in the marketing plan. With a self-contained series like this, there is no "bump" provided for the rest of the DC universe. Whereas *Infinite Crisis* and all the prequels pumped up the sales throughout the DC line, since the finale and relaunch with "One Year Later," sales across the board have been slumping as readers migrate elsewhere. The only exception is Wonder Woman, but she's only had three issues out in all this time, so it's hard to compare her to the others.

House Picks

Brave, bold picks

1. ***Brave and the Bold* #60 (1st Donna Troy)**
2. ***Brave and the Bold* #197 (Batman and Catwoman marry)**
3. ***Brave and the Bold* #96 (Sgt. Rock)**
4. ***Brave and the Bold* #78 (Wonder Woman and Batgirl)**
5. ***Brave and the Bold* #200 (1st Batman and The Outsiders)**

In times of numerous sales declines like these, I am thankful for the Final Order Cutoff systems now employed by both publishers. The opportunity to adjust orders works equally well in times of both decline and explosive growth, which often happen simultaneously, as readers' interests shift.

Michael Tierney *runs* ***Collector's Edition*** *in North Little Rock and* ***The Comic Book Store*** *in Little Rock, Ark. He can be reached at* ***cbsrock@swbell.net*** *or* ***(501) 791-4222.***

89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104
Phantom Stranger	Adam Strange	Black Canary	Bat Squad	House of Mystery	Teen Titans	Plastic Man	Sgt. Rock	Wildcat	Phantom Stranger	Flash	Green Arrow	Meta-morpho	Teen Titans	Metal Men	Deadman
MAY 70	JUL 70	SEP 70	NOV 70	JAN 71	MAR 71	MAY 71	JUL 71	SEP 71	NOV 71	JAN 72	MAR 72	MAY 72	JUL 72	OCT 72	DEC 72
NM price $20	$20	$18	$18	$30	$18	$24	$15	$15	$15	$22	$30	$15	$15	$12	$12

Love Hina #1

Representing daydreaming bachelors everywhere, Keitaro finds himself in a dilemma. Unable to pass the exam to get into Tokyo University, he is exiled from his parents' house and must seek asylum at his grandmother's inn. But no one told him she had left and the inn was now a girl's dorm!

TOKYOPOP
WRITER:
KEN AKAMATSU
ARTIST:
KEN AKAMATSU
B/W • 196 Pgs.
$9.99

Bequeathed Hinata House (complete with hot spring), can he gain the residents' trust, posing as a student of a school that has never admitted him? Then, can he survive the lovely Naru, manipulative Kitsune, kendo-wielding Motoko, and shy Shinobu? Moreover, can he keep the promise he made to his childhood sweetheart to reunite with her at Tokyo U?

Fulfilling a man's fantasy of fending off throngs of young women in various states of undress, Akamatsu has set his sights low in a number of ways. Though naked body parts have been edited out, Keitaro's actions should satisfy perverts everywhere. This competently executed comedy caters to chauvinistic peeping Toms but still retains enough sweetness to lull girls into thinking it's amusing.

★★½ — Oliver Chin

www.tokyopop.com
ISBN: 1-93151-494-1

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Captain Marvel Jr.
FAWCETT, 1942
1. 4000
2. 1500
3. 865
4. 915
5. 735
6-8. 545
9-10. 500
11-15. 390
16-20. 340
21-25. 275
26-30. 235
31-40. 205
41-50. 180
51-70. 155
71-80. 135
81-119. 120

Capt. Storm
DC, 1964
1. 28
2-5. 18
6. 14
7-15. 12
16-18. 9

Cat
MARVEL, 1972
1. 35
2. 15
3. 12
4. 10

Catwoman
DC, 1989
1-2. 3
3-4. 2

Catwoman
DC, 1993
0. 2
1-10. 3
11-50. 2
50/A-50/B 3
51-94. 2
1000000. 3
Ann 1-2 4
Ann 3-4 4

Catwoman
DC, 2002
1. 4
2-59. 3

Cerebus the Aardvark
AARDVARK-VANAHEIM, 1977
0. 4
0/Gold 6
1. 700
1/Counterfeit . . . 60
2. 150
3. 90
4. 75
5. 50
6. 35
7. 20
8-10. 15
11. 12
12-22. 10
23-31. 6
32-40. 5
41-50. 4
51. 6
52-57. 4
58-60. 3
61-62. 4
63-100. 3
101-299. 2
300. 4

Challengers of the Unknown
DC, 1958
1. 1450
2. 375
3-8. 220
9-10. 140
11-15. 90
16-23. 52
24-31. 25
32-49. 20
50-56. 15
57-69. 11
70-73. 7
74. 14
➥Adams art; Deadman
75-80. 7
81. 6
82-87. 5

Chamber of Chills
HARVEY, 1951
1. 350
2-4. 275
5-9. 250
10-19. 225
20-25. 200
26. 175

Chamber of Chills
MARVEL, 1972
1. 25
2-10. 15
11-22. 12
22/30¢ 20
23. 12
23/30¢ 20
24-25. 12

Champions
MARVEL, 1975
1. 15
2-3. 6
4-5. 5
5/30¢ 20
6. 4
6/30¢ 20
7. 4
7/30¢ 20
8-14. 4
14/35¢ 15
15. 4
15/35¢ 15
16-17. 4

Civil War
MARVEL, 2006
1. 10
2. 7
2/Variant 4
3-4/Variant 3

Civil War: Front Line
MARVEL, 2006
1-6. 3

Civil War: X-Men
MARVEL, 2006
1-3. 3

Conan
DARK HORSE, 2004
0. 4
1. 10
1/2nd 3
2. 5
2/2nd-31 3

Conan the Barbarian
MARVEL, 1970
1. 160
➥1st comics Conan
2. 55
3. 72
4. 26
5. 30
6-7. 26
8. 30
9. 20
➥Giant-size
10-11. 35
➥Giant-size
12. 15
13-14. 20
15. 17
16. 20
17. 17
18. 20
19. 17
20. 27
➥1st Red Sonja
21-24. 20
25. 10
26-30. 8
31-35. 7
36-38. 9
39-47. 7
48-50. 6
51-61. 5
61/30¢ 20
62. 5
62/30¢ 20
63. 5
63/30¢ 20
64. 5
64/30¢ 20
65. 5
65/30¢ 20
66-75. 5
75/35¢ 15
76. 5
76/35¢ 15
77. 5
77/35¢ 15
78. 5
78/35¢ 15
79. 5
79/35¢ 15
80-93. 5
94-99. 4
100. 6
101-274. 2
275. 3
Ann 1. 10
Ann 2-3 6
Ann 4-12 2
Special 1 3

Creatures on the Loose
MARVEL, 1971
10. 50
➥1st Kull; Wrightson
11-15. 15
16-22. 10
23-26. 6
27-29. 5
30. 25
➥Man-Wolf
31. 12
32-36. 8
37. 12
King Size 1. . . 10

Crime Suspen-Stories
E.C., 1950
1. 800
1/A. 1000
➥#1 marked out
2. 475
3-5. 315
6-10. 235
11-12. 185
13. 210
14-15. 185
16. 190
17. 235
18-19. 170
20. 215
21. 115
22-23. 145
24-27. 115

Crisis on Infinite Earths
DC, 1985
1. 5
2-3. 4
4. 3
5. 5
6. 3
7-8. 5
9-12. 3

Crypt of Shadows
MARVEL, 1973
1. 35
2. 16
3. 15
4-5. 12
6-14. 10
15-21. 8

Danger Trail
DC, 1950
1. 875
2. 600
3. 1250
➥Scarce
4-5. 385

Daredevil
MARVEL, 1964
-1. 2
1. 3000
➥1st Daredevil
2. 750
3. 550
4. 400
5. 300
6. 225
7. 675
➥1st red costume
8-10. 135
11-15. 85
➥Spider-Man app.
16-17. 120
➥Spider-Man app.
18. 70
➥1st Gladiator
19. 60
20. 55
21-27. 50
28-30. 45
31-42. 40
43. 45
44-49. 30
50-52. 33
53-71. 20
72-80. 17
81. 25
➥Giant-size
82-83. 17
84-99. 14
100. 30
➥Origin recap
101-130. 8
131. 75
➥1st Bullseye
132. 15
132/30¢ 20
133. 6
133/30¢ 20
134. 6
134/30¢ 20
135. 6
135/30¢ 20
136. 6
136/30¢ 20
137-146. 6
146/35¢ 15
147. 6
147/35¢ 15
148. 6
148/35¢ 15
149-157. 6
158. 50
➥Frank Miller starts
159. 22
160-161. 17
162. 9
163. 18
164-167. 11
168. 75
➥1st Elektra
169. 16
170. 10
171. 12
172-177. 7
178-180. 6
181. 15
➥Elektra dies
182-183. 7
184. 6
185. 5
186. 6
187-190. 5
191. 6
192-195. 3
196. 6
197-204. 3
205. 4
206-226. 3
227. 4
➥FM Born Again
228-247. 3
248-249. 4
250. 3
251. 5
252. 4
253. 3
254. 6
➥1st Typhoid Mary
255-257. 3
258. 4
259-295. 3

RETROVIEW
Amazing Spider-Man #44 (485) ★★★½

Marvel
Oct 2002 • 22 pp.
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Romita Jr., Hanna

"Arms and the Men"

When Doc Ock confronts his usurper, Spider-Man is drawn into the fight, as well.

J. Michael Straczynski opens this issue with the best explanation ever for Peter's failure to meet Mary Jane. It also serves as a handy recap of the last few issues for readers who came in late.

While readers know the last name (or is the first name?) of the con man responsible for stealing Doc Ock's technology, Carlyle just isn't that imposing a criminal name. Doc Ock is a scary name, in contrast. Both villains are well-written here, especially Ock's departing line to Spider-Man.

© Marvel

Near CGC copy: **9.8** **Then $2.25 NOW $2**

#113

The Brave and the Bold

Back to its roots for reprints

Beginning with #112, *The Brave and the Bold* increased its page count to 100, with a new lead feature continuing the Batman team-ups and back-up stories reprinting earlier Silver Age stories with a few Golden Age goodies thrown in for good measure.

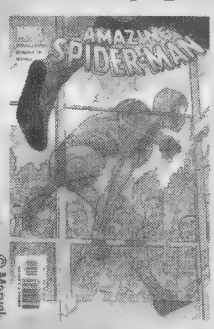
Image © 1974 DC Comics

	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114
	Wonder Woman	Green Arrow	Black Canary	Sgt. Rock	Demon	Wildcat	Joker	Mr. Miracle	100 pgs.; Metal Men	100 pgs.; Aquaman
	FEB 73	APR 73	JUL 73	SEP 73	NOV 73	JAN 74	MAR 74	MAY 74	JUL 74	SEP 74
NM Price	$12	$12	$12	$12	$12	$12	$18	$18	$18	$18

THE BOTTOM LINE

RETROVIEW

Amazing Spider-Man #45 (486) ★★★½



"Until the Stars Turn Cold"

Spider-Man saves Mary Jane, Aunt May, and others from Carlyle's threat with Doc Ock's help.

In scenes reminiscent of *Amazing Spider-Man* Vol. 1 #31, Spider-Man fights his way out of a hotel that's collapsed on top of him. John Romita Jr.'s art is incredible here, showing the struggle that Spidey faces.

After two issues of speculation as to what Carlyle's villainous name will be, J. Michael Straczynski still doesn't settle on one, although Spider-Man does ask if it should be "Carlyle Calamari." And, while there's no final resolution to Peter and Mary Jane's marital woes, there is some sense that things are headed for closure.

Marvel
Nov 2002 • 23 pp
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Romita Jr., Hanna

Best CGC copy: 9.8 **Then $2.25 NOW $2**

CBG Trendwatcher

John Tinkess, Another Dimension

Despite delays, *Civil War* #5 took our top sales spot this month, although we are seeing a small decline in tie-in sales. *JLA*, *New Avengers*, *52*, *Astonishing X-Men*, and *Batman* rounded out the Top 10, and we also saw strong debut sales for *Punisher War Journal* and *Fantastic Four: The End*. We also picked up a nice collection of Bronze Age back issues recently, including a nice run of *Uncanny X-Men* that has been moving quickly.

Overall, new comics sales were down in November, due mainly to fewer comics being released. Delayed shipping schedules are becoming epidemic among many publishers, and I worry that all of these late books will adversely affect the steady recovery the industry has been enjoying recently. It seems as if, the more highly promoted a series is, the more likely it will experience lengthy delays, eventually killing demand. *Civil War*, *Ultimates*, *All Star Batman and Robin*, *Wonder Woman*, *All-Star Superman*, *Ultimate Wolverine vs. Hulk*, and many, many others are among the books that my customers came in looking for week after week, only to face more disappointments.

I think many publishers don't realize the effect these unending delays have on customers and, ultimately, their sales (and ours). Some have stated that delays are necessary in order to retain the integrity of the work for the eventual trade-paperback collection, but in my view they are losing sight of what makes the book market viable for them in the first place: continuing sales of monthly periodicals. It's time for publishers to step up to fix this situation before they erode all the progress we've made reinvigorating the comics market over the last year or two.

At least, we can count on some creators to get their books out on time, and we've been having increasing success in promoting the works of such writers as Brian K. Vaughan and Ed Brubaker to our customers. *Doctor Strange: The Oath* is the best-selling Doctor Strange comic in our 23-year history — with interest continuing to grow each month. Brubaker's runs on *Captain America* and *Daredevil* have been enjoying steady growth, as well, and even his *Uncanny X-Men* work is bringing some ex-*X-Men* readers back to the fold. Both writers show a tremendous respect for the characters while writing highly entertaining stories — and even manage to throw in a few cool bits for older fans.

Recent sales (all unslabbed):

Giant-Size X-Men #1 G/VG $100
Uncanny X-Men #53 VG- $20
Uncanny X-Men #58 VG- $25
Uncanny X-Men #99 VG- $20
Uncanny X-Men #100 VG- $30
Uncanny X-Men #101 VG $35
Uncanny X-Men #113 F/VF $20 (signed by Austin)
Uncanny X-Men #114 VF- $25
Uncanny X-Men #115 VF- $25 (signed by Austin)

House Picks

Brave, bold picks

1. ***Brave and the Bold Team-Ups Archives* Vol. 1**
2. ***Best of the Brave and the Bold* #1-6 (1988 mini-series)**
3. ***Brave and the Bold* #182 (Earth-2 Batman and Robin)**
4. ***Showcase Presents: The Teen Titans* Vol. 1 TPB (includes their earliest appearances from *Brave and the Bold* #54 and 60)**
5. ***Showcase Presents: Justice League of America* Vol. 1 TPB**

John Tinkess runs *Another Dimension* in Calgary, Alberta. He can be reached at *comics@another-dimension.com* or *(403) 283-7078*.

Captain Defenders $

UNSLABBED Near Mint

296-299 2
300 3
301-303 2
304 3
305-311 2
312 3
313-318 2
319 5
320-321 2
321/Variant 3
322-324 2
325 3
326-349 2
350 3
350/Variant 4
351-374 2
375 3
376-379 2
380 3
Ann 1 50
Ann 2-3 9
Ann 4 8
Ann 5 4
Ann 6-10 3
Ann 1997 4

Daredevil
MARVEL, 1998
1/2 5
1 7
1/Ltd. 50
1/Variant 9
2/A-2/B 5
3-5 4
5/A 5
6-15 3
16 5
16/Unlimited 6
17 3
17/Unlimited 5
➥Newsstand variant
18-20 3
20/Unlimited 5
21 3
21/Unlimited 5
22 3
22/Unlimited 5
23 3
23/Unlimited 5
24-36 3
36/No # 5
➥Newsstand; no #
37 3
37/Unlimited 5
➥Newsstand variant
37/No # 4
➥Newsstand; no #

UNSLABBED Near Mint

38-56 3
57 4
58-64 3
65 4
66-89 3

Dark Horse Presents
DARK HORSE, 1986
1 4
2-4 3
5-9 2
10-16 3
17 2
18 3
19-23 2
24 6
➥1st comics Aliens
25-27 2
28 3
29-31 2
32 4
➥Concrete app
33-35 3
36 4
36/A 3
37-39 2
40 3
41-49 2
50 3
51 4
➥2nd Sin City
52-53 3
54 4
55 2
56-57 4
58 2
59-61 3
62 4
➥All Sin City
63-66 3
67 4
68-134 3
135 4
136-149 3
150 5
151-157 3
Ann '97-'00 5

DC Comics Presents
DC, 1978
1 9
2 7
3 4
4-5 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

6 6
7-9 2
9/Whitman 6
10-25 2
26 14
➥1st New Teen Titans
27 3
28-41 2
42-43 1
44 2
45-46 1
47 17
➥1st Masters Universe
48-50 1
51 6
52 3
53-71 1
72 2
73-76 1
77-78 3
79-84 1
85 6
➥Moore Swamp Thing
86-92 1
93 2
94-97 1
Ann 1-Ann 4 3

DC 100 Page Super Spectacular
DC, 1971
4 175
5 350
➥Scarce
6 150
7 60
8-9 75
10-13 60
14-17 45
18 30
19 24
20 35
21-22 22

DC Special
DC, 1968
1 60
2 50
3 35
4 25
5-14 20
15 16
16-28 10
29 12

UNSLABBED Near Mint

DC Special Blue Ribbon Digest
DC, 1980
1 5
2-5 4
6-17 3
18 4
19 3
20 7
21-23 3

DC Special Series
DC, 1977
1 10
2-5 7
6-8 6
9 16
10-14 6
15 8
16 20
➥Jonah Hex dies
17-18 5
19-20 6
21 12
➥1st Miller Batman
22-26 6
27 18

Deadly Hands of Kung Fu
MARVEL, 1974
1 30
2 8
3-5 6
6-10 5
11-19 4
20 7
21-30 3
31 6
32-33 3
Special 1 4

Dead of Night
MARVEL, 1973
1 35
2 12
3-10 8
11 16

Defenders
MARVEL, 1972
1 90
2 35

100 pgs.; Atom	100 pgs.; Spectre	100 pgs.; Sgt. Rock	Wildcat, Joker	Man-Bat	Kamandi	Metal Men	Swamp Thing	Plastic Man, Metamorpho	Sgt. Rock	Flash	Aquaman	Wildcat	Mr. Miracle	Green Arrow, Joker
115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130
NOV 74	JAN 75	MAR 75	APR 75	JUN 75	JUL 75	SEP 75	OCT 75	DEC 75	JAN 76	MAR 76	APR 76	JUN 76	JUL 76	SEP 76	OCT 76
NM price $22	$18	$18	$18	$7	$7	$7	$7	$7	$7	$7	$7	$6	$6	$11	$11

Mad #472

Sporting a nicely painted (not to mention hilarious) cover depicting Tom Cruise and his family ("What, Me Suri?"), *Mad* #472 has art and stories by the usual gang of idiots: Arnie Kogen, Tom Richmond (who does Mort Drucker-like caricatures), Drew Friedman, Sergio Aragonés, and the like. However, it also contains a special "Lesser-Known Comic Book Villains" feature showcasing work by such comic-book artists as Sam Kieth, John Cassaday, Mike Mignola, and Glenn Fabry. This inclusion is a bit jarring, but the piece does a passable job of poking fun at conventions of the super-hero genre. Also jarring are the ads, which now appear regularly in the magazine.

E.C. PUBLICATIONS
WRITERS:
VARIOUS
ARTISTS:
VARIOUS
Color • 56 Pgs.
$3.99

Mad is a shell of its former self (the satire isn't as deadly accurate or as bitingly funny as it was in the old days), but readers can find a few bits of interest scattered throughout this issue. These include an "Unexpected Hassles of New Video Game Consoles" piece that features art by Peter Bagge and a sexually charged *Grey's Anatomy* parody.

★½ **— Brett Weiss**

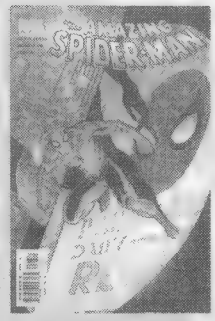
www.madmag.com

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Defenders	
CONTINUED	
3	30
4-5	26
6-7	16
8	25
9	16
10	55
➥Avengers War	
11	15
12-13	9
14-16	10
17-20	7
21-24	6
25-29	7
30-33	4
34	5
34/30¢	20
35	5
35/30¢	20
36	5
36/30¢	20
37	5
37/30¢	20
38-38/30¢	5
39-47	4
48	5
48/35¢	15
49	4
49/35¢	15
50	4
50/35¢	15
51	4
51/35¢	15
52	4
52/35¢	15
53-62	4
63	5
64-92	4
93-100	3
101-152	2
Ann 1	12
Demon	
DC, 1972	
1	30
2	12
3-4	10
5-9	9
10-11	7
12-13	10
14-16	7
Detective Comics	
DC, 206	
0	3
1	80000
2	18250
3	10800
4-5	6850
6-7	4450
8	6500
9-17	4350
18	5000
19	4150
20	6300
21	3250
22	3950
23-26	3250
27	225000
➥1st Batman	
27/2nd	9
28	25000
➥2nd Batman	
29	35000
➥3rd Batman	
30	7500
31	27500
32	6000
33	50000
➥Batman origin	
34	7500
35	10000
36-37	6500
38	57500
➥1st Robin	
39	6000
40	6500
41	4000
42-45	3000
46-50	2000
51-57	1750
58	4750
➥1st Penguin	
59	2000
60	1750
61	1500
62	2250
63	1750
64	5000
➥1st Boy Commandos	
65	2250
66	4000
➥1st Two-Face	
67	2000
68-69	1750
70-71	1500
72-75	1250
76	1500
77-79	1000
80	1250
81-83	1000
84	900
85	1250
86-90	900
91	1000
92-98	800
99	950
100	1000
101	700
102	950
103-108	625
109	850
110-113	625
114	800
115-117	625
118	825
119	600
120	800
➥Penguin app	
121	600
122	1225
123	600
124	800
125-127	600
128	800
129-130	600
131-136	525
137	675
138	925
➥Robotman origin	
139	500
140	4000
➥1st Riddler	
141	575
142	1250
➥2nd Riddler	
143-148	575
149	675
150	550
151	600
152-155	525
156	625
157-160	500
161-167	525
168	3750
➥Joker origin	
169-170	500
171	700
172-176	500
177-179	400
180	450

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
181-186	400
187	425
188-189	400
190	600
191-192	400
193	450
194-199	400
200	575
201-202	400
203	450
204	400
205	575
206-210	400
211	450
212	400
213	525
214-224	375
225	4500
➥1st Manhunter	
226	1500
227-229	500
230	550
231	400
232	300
233	1250
➥1st Batwoman	
234	325
235	600
236	350
237-240	300
241-260	250
261-264	200
265	325
266	200
267	250
268-271	200
272	175
273	200
274-280	150
281-297	125
298	200
299-310	100
311	200
➥1st Catman	
312-326	100
327	225
➥New Bat symbol	
328	175
➥Alfred dies	
329-330	75
331	65
332	115
➥Joker	
333-340	60
341	75
342-352	60
353-358	75
359	350
➥1st Batgirl	
360-362	65
363	100
➥2nd Batgirl	
364	60
365	90
366-368	60
369	75
370	45
371	80
➥Batmobile	
372-376	50
377	65
378-380	50
381-386	40
387	75
388	50
389-390	35
391-393	25
394	35
395	125
➥N. Adams art	
396-397	35
398-399	30
400	175
➥1st Man-Bat	
401	30
402	55
403-404	35
405-407	30
408-410	40
411	30
➥1st Talia	
412-424	25
425-427	20
428-436	15
437	20
➥100-page issue	
438-445	28
➥100-page issue	
446	12
447-450	8
451-455	6
456-457	9
458-462	6
463	45
➥1st Calculator	
464	6
465-468	9
469-470	5
471-473	8
➥1st new Deadshot	
474-476	15
477-479	8
480	5
481	7
482	5
483	8
484	5
485-499	4
500	5
501-503	4
504	6
505-523	4
524	5
525-534	4
535	5
536-564	4
565-568	3
569-570	4
571	3
572	4
573-574	3
575	4
576-577	3
578-585	4
586-587	3
588-590	4
591-675	3
675/Platinum	5
675/Variant	4
676	3
677-682	2
682/Variant	3
683-699	2
700	4
700/Variant	5
701-718	2
719	3
720	4
721-722	3
723-740	2
741	3
742-746	2
747-749	3
750	5
751	12
➥1st Sasha	
752-774	3
775	4
776-799	3
800	4
801-816	3
817	12
818-823	3
1000000	4
1000000/Variant	15
Ann 1	5
Ann 2	4
Ann 3-7	3
Ann 8	4
Ann 9	3
Ann 10	4
Devil Dinosaur	
MARVEL, 1978	
1	5
2-3	4
4	5
5	4
6-9	3
Doctor Solar, Man of the Atom	
GOLD KEY, 1962	
1	150
2	80
3	50
4	60
5	30
6-10	25
11-14	16
15	20
16-20	16
21-27	12
28-31	4
Doctor Strange	
MARVEL, 1968	
169	75
170-171	30
172-173	27
174	20
175	35
176-183	27
Doctor Strange	
MARVEL, 1974	
1	25
2	18
3-4	10
5-6	8
7	7
8-9	4
10	7
11	6
12-13	4
13/30¢	20
14	3
14/30¢	20
15	3
15/30¢	20
16	3
16/30¢	20

RETROVIEW

Amazing Spider-Man #46 (487) ★★★



"Unnatural Enemies"

Doctor Strange warns Spider-Man of a new enemy that Spidey accidentally summoned during his trip to the astral plane.

J. Michael Straczynski has been delving into the spider-related portions of Spider-Man's background and origins. Here, he introduces Shathara, a mystical enemy who's analgous to a spider wasp: a hunter and devourer of spiders.

A worthy adversary, no doubt, and we'll be seeing more of her in the next batch of issues. What is all this building up to? With hindsight, it's easy to see that "The Other" came out of it, but there's more to come between then and now.

Marvel
Dec 2002 • 22 pp.
Writer: J. Michael Straczynski
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Frank Cho

CGC copy: **9.8** **Then $2.25 NOW $2**

© Marvel

#151

Look for the Whitman label

Like many other titles that ran regularly in the 1970s, The Brave and the Bold had a number of issues reprinted by Western Publishing with its Whitman label replacing the familiar DC label. With the exception of #148, Whitman variants exist for #145-165.

Image © 1979 DC Comics

THE BOTTOM LINE

	Wonder Woman	Richard Dragon	Deadman	Green Lantern	Metal Men	GA, Metal Men	Demon	Mr. Miracle	Hawkman	Wonder Woman
	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140
	DEC 77	FEB 77	APR 77	MAY 77	JUL 77	SEP 77	OCT 77	NOV 77	JAN 78	MAR 78
NM Price	$6	$4	$5	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4

RETROVIEW

Superior Straczynski writing

© Marvel

While J. Michael Straczynski's writing is almost always stellar, there were several key moments in his 2002 material that stand out. Most notable was "The Conversation" from #38, which, due to its placement after the Sept. 11 tribute issue (#36), unfortunately lost some of its impact on readers.

The dialogue between Peter and Aunt May was poignant and heartfelt, as two people who cared deeply for each other for years finally were able to totally let their guard down. While Peter's secret identity was, indeed, a revelation for May, it almost seems as though she knew, at least in part, all along.

Straczynski's handling of her character from that point on is brilliant, allowing her to help Peter cover for his identity. A classic moment comes when the pair attempt to board a plane for Hollywood to see Mary Jane and Spider-Man's webshooters set off the security scanners.

UNSLABBED Near Mint

22-23 250
24 240
25 550
➥Avengers app.
26 600
➥Avengers app
27 300
28 500
➥X-Men app.
29-31 260
32-34 250
35-40 165
41-43 110
44 85
45 325
➥1st Inhumans
46 150
47 100
48 460
➥1st Silver Surfer
49 350
50 400
51 150
52 300
➥1st Black Panther
53 140
54 105
55 210
➥Thing vs. Surfer
56 100
57 115
58 90
59 60
60 65
61 70
62-63 60
64 50
65 55
66 115
➥1st Warlock
67 105
68-69 60
70 55
71 45
72 100
➥Silver Surfer app.
73 80
74 85
75 55
76 45
77 50
78 35
79 50
80-85 40
86 50
87 40
88-89 35
90-93 30
94 40
95-96 30
97-98 25
99 30
100 70
101-105 30
106 22
107 30
108 22
109-111 20

Borock's Passing Grade

52 weeks to help creators

Comics Guaranty Corp. President Steve Borock wrapped up 2006 with plans to add to the resources of The Hero Initiative.

The Hero Initiative began as A.C.T.O.R. (for "A Commitment To Our Roots") in 2000. Featuring the slogan, "Because everyone deserves a Golden-Age," it has since disbursed more than $200,000 to established comic-book professionals who need help. It's the first federally chartered not-for-profit corporation dedicated to helping comic-book creators in need.

Its Executive/Fund Raising Board, which administers operations and raises money, comprises Borock, writer Jim McLauchlin, filmmaker Guillermo del Toro, Atomic Comics owner Mike Malve, creator Brian Pulido, Marvel Comics Editor in Chief Joe Quesada, and MegaCon owner Beth Widera.

Borock told ***CBG***, "Jim and I are sending out letters to dealers and certain collectors asking for donations of high-end comics worth CGC grading. We're planning to provide that grading free with the goal of running 52 auctions in 52 weeks: bringing in money steadily via donations from people making money from the artists and writers who made such entertainment."

While the "52" connection is intended to be reminiscent of the year-long DC Comics series of that name, the goals are more long-term.

"As we go on," Borock said, "we're going to work harder to help more people, but we have to build up slush funds for such purposes as tables at shows that don't provide them free." More projects are in the works: such proposals as renting a theater to hold a seminar on making comics are under consideration.

"What we're going to try to do over the next year is figure out at conventions more ways of doing things. We might have some of our experts hold seminars on grading and restoration detection, for example. To begin with, we're just trying to get lots of comics in so as to make money to work with."

Other donations come from a variety of sources. For example, the families of both Dave Cockrum and Marty Nodell have requested that donations be made to The Hero Initiative in their names instead of sending flowers to memorial services. Borock said, "It's just wonderful that these families want to give something back. Some felt the burdens and then ended up with ways to make money. In any case, it's so generous of them, so nice of them!"

Looking at the year to come, he said, "My goal for the year is to make sure that every week, starting in January, money is coming in steadily through the vintage comics sellers' community."

Those who wish to explore making vintage comics donations to the project can reach Borock at *sborock@cgccomics.com*.

The Hero Initiative website is *www.actorcomicfund.org*.

Steve Borock *is the president of and primary grader for* ***Comics Guaranty LLC.*** *He can be reached at* ***(941) 360-3991*** *or* ***sborock@cgccomics.com.*** *Visit the firm's website at* ***www.cgccomics.com.***

UNSLABBED Near Mint

17 3
17/30¢ 20
18-23 3
23/35¢ 15
24 3
24/35¢ 15
25 3
25/35¢ 15
26-81 2
Ann 1 6
Special 1 3

Donald Duck
DELL, 1952
26 300
27-29 100
30-44 65
45 125
➥Barks art
46 175
➥Barks "Secret"
47-51 65
52 150
➥Barks "Lost"
53 65
54 125
➥Barks Forbid. Valley
55-58 50
59-60 125
➥Barks "Ants"
61-67 40
68 100
➥Barks art
69-70 40
71-84 30
85-120 25
121-135 20
136-150 15
151-190 10
191-210 5
211-216 3
217 5
218-219 10
220-228 15
229-240 8
241-245 15
246 17
247-249 5
250 8
251-260 4
261-279 3
280-285 2
286 3
287-307 2

Doom Patrol
DC, 1964
86 135
87 70
88-90 50
91-98 40
99 60
100 75
101-120 25
121 45
➥Doom Patrol dies
122-124 2

Doom Patrol
DC, 1987
1 3
2-18 2
19 3
20-49 2
50 3
51-56 2
57 3
58-87 2
Ann 1 1
Ann 2 4

Dudley Do-Right
CHARLTON, 1970
1 45
2 18
3 12
4-7 10

Dynamo
TOWER, 1966
1 35
2-3 25
4 40

Earth Man on Venus
AVON, 1951
1 875

80 Page Giant Magazine
DC, 1964
1 295
2 150
3-5 125
7 150
8 265
➥Secret Origins
9-11 125
12-15 80

Elseworlds 80-Page Giant
DC, 1999
1 110

Eternals
MARVEL, 1976
1 10
1/30¢ 25
2 5
2/30¢ 20
3-5 3
6-12 2
12/35¢ 15
13 2
13/35¢ 15
14 2
14/35¢ 15
15 2
15/35¢ 15
16 2
16/35¢ 15
17-19 2
Ann 1 7

Excalibur
MARVEL, 1988
-1 2
1 3
2-49 2
50 3
51-70 2
71 4
➥Hologram cover
72-75 2
75/Variant 4
76-81 2
82 3
82/Variant 4
83-99 2
100 3
101-124 2
125 3
Ann 1 4
Ann 2 3

Exiles
MARVEL, 2001
1 4
2-24 2
25-59 3
60 5
➥Age of Apoc.
61 4
➥Age of Apoc.
62-86 3

Fables
DC, 2002
1 4
2-5 3
6/Retailer ed. 15
6-49 3
50 4
51-53 3

Family Guy
DEVIL'S DUE, 2006
1-2 7

Famous First Edition
DC, 1974
F-4 15
➥Whiz #2
F-5 13
➥Batman #1
F-6 10
➥W. Woman #1
F-7 12
➥All-Star #3
F-8 9
➥Flash #1
C-26 10
➥Action #1
C-28 9
➥Detective #27
C-30 10
➥Sensation #1
C-61 9
➥Superman #1

Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1961
1 20000
➥1st Fantastic Four
1/Golden 70
2 4500
➥1st Skrulls
3 3000
4 3500
5 5000
➥1st Dr. Doom
6 2000
7 1250
8 1200
9-10 1150
11 1000
12 2700
➥Thing vs. Hulk
13 600
14 500
15 700
16-19 500
20 600
21 450

Black Canary | Aquaman | Creeper | Green Arrow | Phantom Stranger | Unknown Soldier | Supergirl | Plastic Man | Teen Titans | Superman | Flash | Atom | Red Tornado | Meta-morpho | Green Lantern | Doctor Fate

141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156
MAY 78	JUL 78	SEP 78	NOV 78	DEC 78	JAN 79	FEB 79	MAR 79	APR 79	MAY 79	JUN 79	JUL 79	AUG 79	SEP 79	OCT 79	NOV 79
NM $10	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4

A Midnight Opera Vol. 1

The vampire Ein and his werewolf brother Leroux have survived centuries of persecution by Catholic fundamentalists who wish to exterminate all heathens and demonkind. Seeking solace through the music of his day, now "Einblick" is a rocking guitarist who has fallen in love with the pretty mortal Dahlia Whyte. But his unsettled past will soon come to haunt them both.

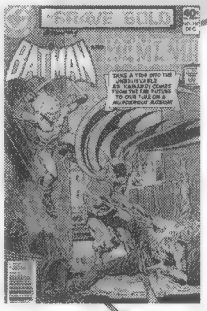
TOKYOPOP
WRITER AND ARTIST:
HANZO STEINBACH
B/W • 192 Pgs.
$9.95

Interrupting Ein's blissful plans, Leroux knocks some sense into his sibling, as their "undead" clan is on the verge of a new war. Elizabeth Bathory, the leader who had replaced Ein, seeks to conquer mankind, whereas the Order of the Holy Roman Empire is ready to rumble again. Will peace, love, and understanding be caught in the crossfire?

The German Steinbach crafts a Euro-Goth version of *Underworld* meets *American Werewolf* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. The latest in this publisher's attempts to launch the oxymoronic "American manga" line, this series has an energetic style, but its substance fails to convey a truly byzantine backstory.

★★½ **— Oliver Chin**

www.tokyopop.com



▲ #157

Keeping up with Kamandi

After The Last Boy on Earth's series ended abruptly in the DC Implosion, Kamandi paid a visit to present-day Gotha City in *The Brave and the Bold* #157. During the story, he revealed some of what had happened at the end of his own series.

image © 1979 DC Comics

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Fantastic Four CONTINUED	
112 ➥Thing vs. Hulk	175
113	25
114	27
115	25
116 ➥52 pages	65
117-120	15
121 ➥Galactus app	30
122	45
123	27
124-125	20
126	30
127	35
128	30
129	25
130-132	15
133-145	12
146	10
147	15
148-154	10
155	15
156-158	12
159-163	10
164	9
165	7
166	10
167	15
168-169	10
169/30¢	20
170	10
170/30¢	20
171	6
171/30¢	20
172	6
172/30¢	20
173	6
173/30¢	20
174-183	6
183/35¢	15
184	6
184/35¢	15
185	5
185/35¢	15
186	5
186/35¢	15
187	5
187/35¢	15
188-200 ➥Byrne script/art begins	5
201-239	4
240-248	3
249	4
250	5
251	4
252-255	3
256	4
257-259	3
260	5
261	4
262-268	3
269	4
270	3
271	4
272	5
273-286	3
287-295	2
296	3
297-299	2
300	3
301-318	2
319	3
320-346	2
347-350	3
351-357	2
358	3
359-370	2
371	3
372-374	1
375	3
376-378	1
379-380	2
381	3
382	2
383-387	1
387/Variant	3
388-394	2
394/Collector's	3
395-398	2
398/Variant	3
399	2
399/Variant	3
400	4
401-415	2
416-500/Collector's	4
501	2
502	5
503-508	3
509	2
510-513	3
514-516	2
517-526	3
527 ➥Straczynski starts	7
527/Variant	4
527/DirCut	5
527/Conv	7
528-535	3
536	10
537	7
538-539	3
Ann 1	900
Ann 2	500
Ann 3	175
Ann 4	90
Ann 5	60
Ann 6	40
Ann 7-8	18
Ann 9	10
Ann 10-11	8
Ann 12-14	5
Ann 15-27	3
Special 1	2
Ashcan 1	1

Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1996

1	4
1/Variant	3
1/Gold	4
2-11	2
12	3
13	2

Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1998

1	3
1/A	4
2-5	3
6-24	2
25	3
26-34	2
35	3
36-49	2
50-51	4
52	2
53	3
54	4
55-59	2
60	1
61-70	2
Ann 1998	5
Ann 1999	4
Ann 2001	3

Fantasy Masterpieces
MARVEL, 1966

1	75
2	35
3	30
4-8	18
9	30
10	10
11	15

F.B.I.
DELL,,1965

1	60

Fear
MARVEL, 1970

1	95
2	30
3-4	15
5	20
6-9	15
10 ➥Man-Thing starts	35
11	18
12	12
13-14	9
15-17	12
18	9
19 ➥1st Howard Duck	25
20 ➥Morbius begins	20
21	9
22	7
23	8
24 ➥Blade app.	12
25	8
26-29	7
30	12
31	7

52
DC, 2006

1	4
2-6	3
7	4
8-29	3

Fight Comics
FICTION HOUSE, 1940

1	3500
2	1250
3	650
4	600
5	500
6-10	450
11-14	425
15-16	500
17-18	425
19	450
20-30	350
31-40	200
41-50	175
51-60	125
61-86	100

Fightin' 5
CHARLTON, 1964

28	20
29-30	10
31-39	9
40 ➥1st Peacemaker	18
41	10
42-49	3

Fightin' Army
CHARLTON, 1956

16	24
17-20	18
21-30	15
31-40	12
41-50	10
51-75	8
76 ➥Willy Schultz	10
77-100	6
101-120	5
121-172	4

Flash
DC, 1959

105	6500
106	2000
107	1000
108	850
109	650
110	1500
111	450
112 ➥1st Elong. Man	600
113	550
114	275
115	350
116	250
117 ➥1st Earth-2	300
118-120	250
121-122	200
123 ➥GA Flash app.	1500
124-128	150
129 ➥GA Flash app.	325
130	150
131-136	125
137 ➥GA Flash app	475
138-140	125
141-142	150
143	125
144-150	100
151	80
152-153	65
154-158	60
159	75
160 ➥Giant-size	90
161-164	50
165	70
166-167	50
168	95
169 ➥Origin of Flash	70
170-174	50
175 ➥Race w/Superman	175
176-179	40
180	50
181-183	35
184	50
185-186	35
187	65
188-191	35
192-193	25
194	40
195	25
196	40
197-200	25
201-202	20
203	25
204	20
205	35
206	20
207-212	17
213	25
214	40
215	35
216-219	17
220-228	15
229	30
230-231	15
232 ➥100-page issue	30
233-237	10
238-245	7
246	12
247-262	7
263-273	4
274	5
275	7
276-288	4
289	5
290-299	3
300	5
301-304	3
305-306	4
307-349	3
350	7
Ann 1	400

Flash Comics
DC, 1940

1 ➥1st Flash, Hawkman	70000
2	8000
3	5500
4	4500
5	3500
6	5000

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

RetroView THE BATMAN ADVENTURES THE LOST YEARS

Reviewed by Brent Frankenhoff

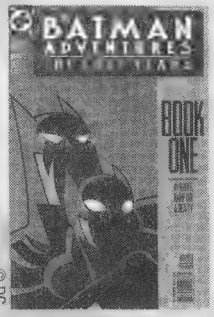
After almost six years, two successful animated series, and two companion comics series, fans of *Batman: The Animated Series* and its later incarnations were curious about the changes between those two animated series and companion comics series. Where did the younger Robin come from? How did Batgirl end up teaming with The Dark Knight? And what happened to Dick Grayson, the former Robin? In 1998, writer Hilary J. Bader and artists Bo Hampton and Terry Beatty filled in some of the blanks in *The Batman Adventures: The Lost Years*.

Batman Adventures: The Lost Years ™ DC

COST TO OWN THE ORIGINALS IN NM: $10

	Kam-andi	Wonder Woman	Ra's al Ghul	Supergirl	Adam Strange	Sgt. Rock	Black Lightning	Hawkman, Hawkgirl	Man-Bat	Black Canary
	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166
	DEC 79	JAN 80	FEB 80	MAR 80	APR 80	MAY 80	JUN 80	JUL 80	AUG 80	SEP 80
NM Price	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4

Batman ... Lost Years #1 ★★★★



DC
Jan 1998 • 22 pp.
Writer: Hilary J. Bader
Pencils: Bo Hampton
Inks: Terry Beatty
Cover: Ty Templeton

"Lost Years"

As Dick Grayson graduates from college and prepares for life on his own, Batman and Robin disagree about Batman's methods, driving Batman to consider a new sidekick.

From his introduction in *Detective Comics* #38, Robin was always designed as a way to lighten Batman's darker nature. Here, Hilary Bader plays up that dichotomy with Robin attempting to stop Batman's interrogation of a criminal in front of the felon's family.

Meanwhile, through a series of what appear to be intentional slips, secret identities begin to be uncovered. It's a good set-up for the rest of the mini-series

No CGC copies **Then $1.95 NOW $2**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

7 4500
8 3000
9-10 3250
11-20 2000
21-24 1600
25-40 1000
41-50 800
51-61 600
62 1000
↳Kubert Hawkman
63-69 600
70-85 550
86 2250
↳1st Black Canary
87 875
88-91 900
92 3000
↳1st solo Bl. Canary
93 700
94-99 1000
100 2500
↳Scarce
101-102 ... 2250
↳Scarce
103 2500
↳Scarce
104 7000
↳Flash origin recap

Flintstones
DELL, 1961
1 55
2 38
3-5 30
6-7 24
8-10 20
11-20 18
21-30 15
31-40 12
41-60 9

Flintstones
CHARLTON, 1970
1 36
2 22
3-5 14
6-10 9
11-20 7
21-30 5
31-50 4

Forever People
DC, 1971
1 35
2 20
3-5 18
6-11 14

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Four Star Spectacular
DC, 1976
1 12
2-6 7

Frankenstein
MARVEL, 1973
1 40
2 15
3-5 9
6-7 7
8 18
9 20
10 6
11-18 5

Freedom Fighters
DC, 1976
1 12
2-3 5
4-15 4

Futurama
BONGO, 2000
1 7
1/2nd-19 3

Future World Comics
GEORGE W. DOUGHERTY, 1946
1 200
2 160

Generation X
MARVEL, 1994
-1 2
1/2-1/2/Ltd. 3
1 4
2-24 2
25 3
26-49 2
50-50/ Autographed .. 3
51-56 2
57 3
58-74 2
75 3
Ann 1995 4
Ann '96-'97 ... 3
Ann '98-'99 ... 4
Ashcan 1 1
Holiday 1 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

George of the Jungle
GOLD KEY, 1969
1 35
2 24

Ghost Rider
MARVEL, 1973
1 130
2 37
3-4 25
5 23
6-14 15
15-16 12
17 10
17/30¢ 20
18 10
18/30¢ 20
19 10
19/30¢ 20
20 10
21-24 7
24/35¢ 15
25 7
25/35¢ 15
26 7
26/35¢ 15
27-30 7
31-49 6

Ghost Rider
CONTINUED
50 12
51-68 5
69-80 4
81 10

Giant-Size Avengers
MARVEL, 1974
1 30
2 25
3-4 20
5 15

Giant-Size Captain America
MARVEL
1 20

Giant-Size Captain Marvel
MARVEL
1 16

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Giant-Size Chillers
MARVEL, 1974
1 25
↳1st Lilith

Giant-Size Chillers
MARVEL, 1975
1 20
2-3 15

Giant-Size Conan
MARVEL, 1974
1 16
2 10
3 7
4-5 6

Giant-Size Creatures
MARVEL, 1974
1 25

Giant-Size Daredevil
MARVEL, 1975
1 15

Giant-Size Defenders
MARVEL, 1974
1 20
2-3 10
4-5 7

Giant-Size Doc Savage
MARVEL, 1975
1 10

Giant-Size Doctor Strange
MARVEL, 1975
1 15

Giant-Size Dracula
MARVEL, 1974
2 22
↳was GS Chillers
3-4 15
5 20
↳1st Marvel Byrne

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Giant-Size Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1974
1 20
2 12
3 10
4 12
5-6 10

Giant-Size Hulk
MARVEL, 1975
1 23

Giant-Size Hulk
MARVEL, 2006
1 8

Giant-Size Invaders
MARVEL, 1975
1 15
↳G.A. Subby origin

Borock's Passing Grade

Some comics are all set!

How active have you been on Comics Guaranty Company's website? If you've only dipped into its content (and you didn't check Page 7 of ***CBG*** #1624), you may be unaware of a facet of the comics-collecting community.

CGC's Comics Registry (*www.CGCcomics.com* and click on "Registry") is a site in which collectors identify their graded collections — and even participate in an awards competition.

CGC President and Primary Grader Steve Borock said the project had begun some time ago, when the coin division of CGC's parent company the Certified Collectibles Group found its registry service becoming a huge focus of its online websites.

"At the moment," Borock told ***CBG*** in mid-December 2006, "we've established 407 total set definitions." Those "sets" are agreed on between the collector and CGC — and the competitions among the 789 participants of 2006 were for the set categories Best Golden Age, Best Silver Age, Best Bronze Age, Best Modern Age, Best Presentation, and "Achievement in Collecting Comics." Those registry awards were in addition to CGC's awards category "Best Forumite Forum Fanatic." Winners earned a plaque and the pleasure that comes from winning.

Borock said set definitions are varied: "They could be *Superman* #1-100, *Ultimate Spider-Man* #1-100, *All-Star* #1-57, or *Origin* #1-6 — or certain segments of runs. The last time I checked, we had 3,749 registered sets. In the case of the awards, you get points based both on grade and completion of the set."

But participants aren't necessarily in it for the ego fulfillment of competition.

"It's a place where collectors can showcase their graded collections. And it puts collectors in touch with each other. What's really cool is that someone can contact you through the website, even without knowing your name, and you can make arrangements no matter where you are to add to your collection. You can be in China on business and still add to your collection a book that's in America.

"And, because you can post pictures, you don't have to travel with your collection to show it off."

And the idea is to have fun. "We're already getting fun from our chat boards," Borock said, "but the chat boards are interconnected with the registry and let participants see outstanding items. We get such comments as, 'I've never seen that cover!' The bottom line is you find people who have, say, a #1 set of *Fantastic Fours* and then somebody like Greg Loey, who has the best DC 100-pagers."

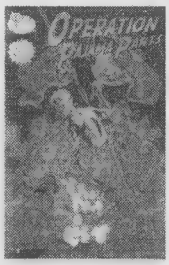
From the days when kids sat around in a rec room to compare their favorite comics to today's online communities has been a span of decades. But the motivations are the same, and so are the qualifications. "At the same time as sets feature Golden Age comics and first issues between 1970 and 1982, we have Valiant variants and the *Welcome Back, Kotter* series," Borock said. "It's about having fun and sharing your collection with others online."

Steve Borock *is the president of and primary grader for* ***Comics Guaranty LLC.*** *He can be reached at* ***(941) 360-3991*** *or* ***sborock@cgccomics.com.*** *Visit the firm's website at* ***www.cgccomics.com.***

Blackhawk	Green Arrow	Zatanna	Nemesis	Scalphunter	Firestorm	Guardians of the Universe	Green Lantern	Lois Lane	Swamp Thing	Elongated Man	Creeper	Legion of Super-Heroes	Spectre, Nemesis	Hawk and Dove	E-2 Robin
167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182
OCT 80	NOV 80	DEC 80	JAN 81	FEB 81	MAR 81	APR 81	MAY 81	JUN 81	JUL 81	AUG 81	SEP 81	OCT 81	NOV 81	DEC 81	JAN 82
NM Price $4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$3	$3	$3

Operation Pajama Pants

This insane little comic is about an archaeologist and his girl finding a pair of pajama pants that belonged to the Egyptian sun god, Set. The archaeologist puts them on and gains superpowers. Back in the day, this probably would've made a good back-up story somewhere. There's an awful joke about a Sun Goddess Negligee and an odd call back to a scorpion.



FAKE MCCOY
WRITER:
CORY HARRIS
ARTIST:
ZIGGY BLUMENTHAL
B/W • 16 Pgs.
$2

It's difficult to visualize the series continuing past this issue. The premise sounds like something that came out of a drunken binge at the hotel bar during a convention. ("Hey, I know! *Operation Pajama Pants*!") Where do you go after the super-secret origin? What compelling reason do readers have to buy #2 or #3? How many unanswered questions can you generate around a ridiculous set of super-powered pants? There's a rule in improv: you want to start "low" and end "high," meaning your offers in the scene get more ridiculous as it goes. If you start too ridiculous, it's harder to raise the stakes. *OPP* starts too high, but it's harmless fun.

★★½ — Tony DiGerolamo

www.fakemccoy.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Giant-Size Iron Man
MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 17

Giant-Size Kid Colt
MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 27
2-3 . . . 20

Giant-Size Man-Thing
MARVEL, 1974
1 . . . 15
2 . . . 9
3 . . . 12
4 . . . 10
5 . . . 12

Giant-Size Marvel Triple Action
MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 15
2 . . . 12

Giant-Size Master of Kung Fu
MARVEL, 1974
1 . . . 17
2 . . . 12
3-4 . . . 10

Giant-Size Power Man
MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 20

Giant-Size Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1974
1 . . . 35
2-3 . . . 12
4 . . . 45
➥Punisher app.
5 . . . 12
6 . . . 15

Giant-Size Super-Heroes
MARVEL, 1974
1 . . . 25

Giant-Size Super-Stars
MARVEL, 1974
1 . . . 20

Giant-Size Super-Villain Team-Up
MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 17
2 . . . 10

Giant-Size Thor
MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 20

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Giant-Size Werewolf By Night
MARVEL, 1974
2 . . . 20
3-5 . . . 15

Giant-Size X-Men
MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 800
➥1st new X-Men
2 . . . 80
3-4 . . . 5

G.I. Combat
DC, 1957
44 . . . 500
45 . . . 300
46 . . . 250
47 . . . 225
48-50 . . . 100
51-54 . . . 85
55 . . . 125
56-60 . . . 85
61-66 . . . 70
67 . . . 125
➥1st Tank Killer
68 . . . 400
69-86 . . . 70
87 . . . 300
➥1st Haunted Tank
88-100 . . . 55
101-110 . . . 45
111-113 . . . 38
114 . . . 75
➥Haunted Tank origin
115-120 . . . 28
121-140 . . . 22
141-145 . . . 8
146-150 . . . 10
151-160 . . . 8
161-180 . . . 7
181-200 . . . 5
201-250 . . . 4
251-288 . . . 3

G.I. Joe
IMAGE, 2001
1-3 . . . 3
4 . . . 4
5-22 . . . 3
22/Graham . . . 12
23-25 . . . 3
26-35 . . . 3
35/Variant . . . 4
36-42 . . . 3

G.I. Joe, A Real American Hero
MARVEL, 1982
1 . . . 14
2 . . . 8
3-9 . . . 4
10 . . . 6
11-13 . . . 4
14 . . . 5
15-18 . . . 4
19 . . . 6
20 . . . 4
21 . . . 15
➥Silent issue
22-55 . . . 4
56 . . . 5
57 . . . 3
58 . . . 4
59-151 . . . 3
152-154 . . . 7
155 . . . 16
➥Low circulation
YB 1 . . . 3
YB 2-4 . . . 2
Special 1 . . . 20

The Brave and the Bold

Heading outside

In mid-1983, after almost 30 years, The Brave and the Bold was canceled to make way for *Batman and the Outsiders*.

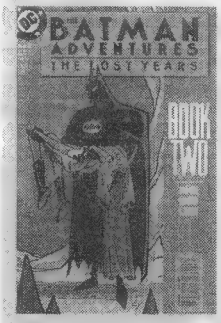
The title returned in 1991 as a six-issue mini-series written by Mike Grell and Mike Baron with art by Shea Anton Pensa.

Image © 1983 DC Comics

THE BOTTOM LINE

RETROVIEW

Batman ... Lost Years #2 ★★★



"Graduation Day"

Dick Grayson decides he can no longer be Robin at Batman's side after helping defeat The Joker's latest scheme.

What would a Batman mini-series be without an appearance by The Clown Prince of Crime? Hilary Bader captures the character so well, you can almost hear Mark Hamill's voice emanating from the word balloons.

In the "look quick or you'll miss it" category, check out the boy watching the action from an adjacent rooftop. Foreshadowing, anyone?

Dick's decision to strike out on his own is believeable and heart-wrenching.

DC
Feb 1998 • 22 pp.
Writer: Hilary J. Bader
Pencils: Bo Hampton
Inks: Terry Beatty
Cover: Ty Templeton

© DC

Xs are copies Then $1.95 NOW $2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Gorgo
CHARLTON, 1961
1 . . . 200
2-3 . . . 100
4 . . . 75
5 . . . 50
6-10 . . . 40
11-16 . . . 30
17-23 . . . 20

Green Hornet Comics
HARVEY, 1940
1 . . . 4500
2 . . . 1500
3 . . . 1250
4-6 . . . 1000
7 . . . 900
8 . . . 750
9 . . . 900
10 . . . 650
11-19 . . . 600
20 . . . 700
21-31 . . . 400
32-38 . . . 300
39 . . . 350
40-47 . . . 250

Green Lama
SPARK, 1944
1 . . . 750
2 . . . 475
3 . . . 340
4-5 . . . 240
6-8 . . . 180

Green Lantern
DC, 1941
1 . . . 37500
➥Grn Lantern origin
2 . . . 7500
3 . . . 5500
4 . . . 4000
5 . . . 2750
6 . . . 2250
7-10 . . . 2000
11-20 . . . 1500
21-30 . . . 1250
31-34 . . . 1000
35-38 . . . 1250

Green Lantern
DC, 1960
1 . . . 4500
➥1st Guardians
2 . . . 1000
3 . . . 600
4-5 . . . 450
6 . . . 400
7-10 . . . 300
11-12 . . . 200
13 . . . 250
14-16 . . . 175
17-20 . . . 150
21-27 . . . 125
28-30 . . . 100
31-39 . . . 75
40 . . . 350
➥GA Lantern app
41-49 . . . 75
50-51 . . . 60
52 . . . 80
53-58 . . . 55
59 . . . 125
➥1st Guy Gardner
60-75 . . . 50
76 . . . 375
➥Green Arrow starts
77-78 . . . 75
79-84 . . . 60
85 . . . 50
86 . . . 60
➥Drug issue
87 . . . 50
88 . . . 30
89 . . . 45
90-92 . . . 10
93-99 . . . 9
100 . . . 10
101 . . . 9
102-111 . . . 4
112 . . . 8
113-115 . . . 3
116 . . . 8
117-121 . . . 3
122 . . . 4
123 . . . 6
124-130 . . . 3
131-135 . . . 2
136-139 . . . 3
140 . . . 2
141 . . . 5
➥1st Omega Men
142-144 . . . 3
145-149 . . . 2
150 . . . 5
151-173 . . . 2
174 . . . 3
175-178 . . . 2
179 . . . 3
180-193 . . . 2
194 . . . 3
195 . . . 4
196-205 . . . 2
Special 1-2 . . . 3

Grendel
COMICO, 1983
1 . . . 45
2 . . . 35
3 . . . 26

Grendel
COMICO, 1986
1 . . . 5
2-5 . . . 4
6-15 . . . 3
16 . . . 4
17-32 . . . 3
33 . . . 4
34-39 . . . 3
40 . . . 4

Groo the Wanderer
MARVEL, 1985
1 . . . 5
2-3 . . . 4
4-30 . . . 3
31-49 . . . 2
50 . . . 3
51-99 . . . 2
100 . . . 3
101-120 . . . 2

Haunted
CHARLTON, 1971
1 . . . 12
2-3 . . . 6
4-6 . . . 5
7-10 . . . 4
11-75 . . . 3

Haunt of Fear
E.C., 1950
1 . . . 2750
2-3 . . . 1000
4 . . . 750
5 . . . 550
6 . . . 425
7-9 . . . 400
10 . . . 375
11-13 . . . 300
14 . . . 450
15-18 . . . 300
19 . . . 375
20 . . . 300
21-28 . . . 250

Herbie
ACG, 1964
1 . . . 95
2 . . . 60
3-5 . . . 48
6-7 . . . 40
8 . . . 50
9-10 . . . 38
11-23 . . . 30

Hero for Hire
MARVEL, 1972
1 . . . 125
2 . . . 30
3 . . . 14
4-6 . . . 12
7-9 . . . 9
10 . . . 8
11-16 . . . 9

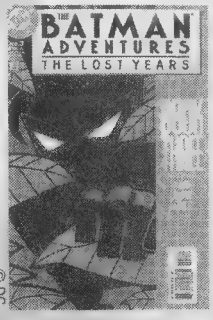
Hong Kong Phooey
CHARLTON, 1975
1 . . . 40
2 . . . 20
3-9 . . . 10

Hot Wheels
DC, 1970
1 . . . 45
2 . . . 30
3-5 . . . 24
6 . . . 30

House of M
MARVEL, 2005
1 . . . 4
1/Quesada . . . 30
1/DirCut . . . 4
1/Madurera . . . 12
1/Gatefold . . . 5
2 . . . 3
2/Dodson . . . 25
3 . . . 6
➥Hawkeye returns
3/Cassaday . . . 20
4 . . . 3
4/Peterson . . . 15
5 . . . 5
5/McKone . . . 15
6 . . . 3
6/Land . . . 15
7 . . . 4
8 . . . 3

	Riddler	Huntress	Green Arrow	Hawkman	Metal Men	Rose and Thorn		Adam Strange	Joker	Superboy
	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192
	FEB 82	MAR 82	APR 82	MAY 82	JUN 82	JUL 82	AUG 82	SEP 82	OCT 82	NOV 82
NM Price	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$1	$1	$1	$8	$1

Batman ... Lost Years #3 ★★★



DC
Mar 1998 • 22 pp.
Writer: Hilary J. Bader
Pencils: Bo Hampton
Inks: Terry Beatty
Cover: Ty Templeton

"Now You See 'Em"

In a journey similar to Bruce Wayne's, Dick Grayson seeks out advanced martial arts knowledge. Along the way, he encounters Two-Face in the jungles of South America.

In the second animated series, Nightwing appeared as a solo character, fully trained and ready for action. In this issue, Hilary Bader shows that not only wasn't it an instantaneous change, but that there were many obstacles along the way.

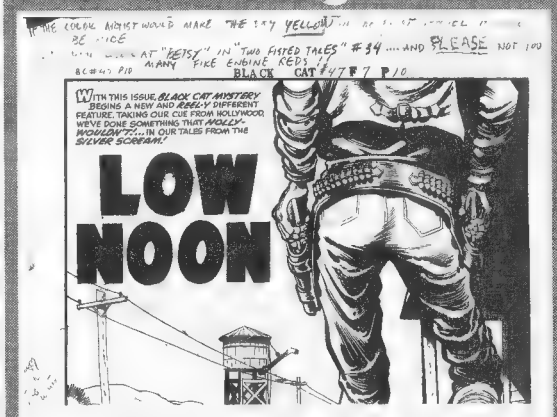
It's a good interlude and a creative way to change Robin into Nightwing without involving The Man of Steel and his Kandorian legends, as the comics origins have retconned over the years.

No CGC copies

Then $1.95 NOW $2

Giant-Iron $

Original Art



Hidden clues in art — Howard Nostrand

One of the interesting aspects of collecting art is the insight you can gain from the extraneous writing and notes that you find in the margins or on the backs of originals. These can range from grocery lists to editorial notes for changes (including censorship) to writing that provides insight as to the artist's influences when drawing a particular story.

I recently obtained several Harvey horror stories including "Low Noon," a grim satire on the famous movie *High Noon*. The art was by **Howard Nostrand**. At the top of the splash was written, "If the color artist would make the sky yellow in the first panel it would be nice ... Let him look at "Betsy" in *Two Fisted Tales* #34 ... and please not too many fire engine reds!!!"

Nostrand himself commented in his sole interview on how he studied both **Wally Wood** and **Jack Davis**' art when doing his earliest work for Harvey. Davis did "Betsy" in *Two Fisted* and "Low Noon" is done in a Davis style.

If reading about things in an interview is interesting, seeing the artist's notes about swiping from various artists on the art itself has an even greater impact. In this case, it documents the influence E.C. had on some of the artists who worked for its competitors.

*— **George Hagenauer** reports on the original art markets for **CBG**. Write him at **yellowkd@merr.com**.*

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
House of Mystery DC, 1951	
1	2000
2	850
3	600
4-5	450
6-10	350
11-15	300
16-25	220
26-35	170
36-50	140
51-61	95
62	70
63	85
64	70
65	85
66-69	70
70	85
71-75	65
76	85
77-79	65
80-83	54
84-85	85
86-99	54
100	65
101-116	45
117-119	35
120	45
121-130	28
131-142	22
143	175
➥J'onn J'onzz starts	
144	75
145-155	50
156	75
➥1st Robby Reed	
157-159	50
160	90
➥1st S.A. Plastic Man	
161	35
162-173	32
174	50
175	45
176-177	24
178	45
179	60
➥1st Wrightson art	
180-181	25
182	18
183	25
184	18
185	30
186	75
187	20
188	30
189-190	20
191	25
192	20
193	25
194	30
195	45
➥Wrightson swamp man	
196-201	20
202-203	14
204	20
205-206	12
207	40
➥Wrightson art	
208	12
209-213	10
214-220	6
221	12
222-223	6
224	35
225-226	18
227	27
228-229	18
230-250	5
251-259	4
260-321	3
House of Secrets DC, 1956	
1	1500
2	550
3	450
4	350
5-7	200
8	230
9-12	200
13-15	125
16-20	110
21	85
22	80
23	100
➥1st Mark Merlin	
24-30	80
31-50	65
51-60	52
61	125
➥1st Eclipso	
62	60
63-65	50
66	65
➥Eclipso cover	
67	40
68-79	36
80	45
81	55
➥1st Abel	
82-84	20
85	32
86	20
87	45
➥Wrightson art	
88-91	40
92	450
➥1st Swamp Thing	
93-99	25
100	27
101-112	18
113-141	10
142-154	7
Hulk MARVEL, 1999	
1	4
1/A	5
1/Gold	4
2-11	3
Hulk MARVEL, 1978 ➥Magazine	
10-21	7
22-27	5
Human Torch MARVEL, 1940	
1	32000
2	7400
3	4800
4	3400
5	4650
6-7	2100
8	3400
9	2100
10	2750
11-15	1850
16-20	1250
21-30	1025
31-38	850
Identity Crisis DC, 2004	
1	15
1/Sketch	225
1/DF	15
2	8
3	7
4	8
5	7
6	8
7	7
7/DF Morales	15
7/DF Turner	25
Incredible Hulk MARVEL, 1962	
-1	2
1	13000
➥1st Hulk	
2	3500
3	2000
4-5	1750
6	2250
102	150
103	100
104	75
105	70
106-112	50
113-115	40
116-121	35
122	55
➥Thing vs. Hulk	
123-125	30
126-130	25
131	30
132	25
133	20
134-136	16
➥Harlan Ellison ➥1st Doc Samson	
137-151	20
152	25
153-160	20
161	30
162	55
➥1st Wendigo	
163-171	15
172	25
➥X-Men app.	
173-176	15
177-178	17
179	16
180	180
➥Wolverine cameo	
181	750
➥1st Wolverine story	
181/Ace	5
182	100
➥2nd Wolverine	
183	12
184-190	10
191-198	8
198/30¢	20
199	8
199/30¢	20
200	11
200/30¢	30
201	7
201/30¢	20
202	7
202/30¢	20
203-212	7
212/35¢	15
213	7
213/35¢	15
214	7
214/35¢	15
215	7
215/35¢	15
216	7
216/35¢	15
217-218	7
219-240	5
241-249	4
250	7
251-285	3
286	4
287-295	3
296	5
297	4
298-299	3
300	4
301-319	3
320-323	2
324	5
325	3
326	4
327-328	3
329	2
➥1st McFarlane	
330-334	5
335	2
336-339	3
340	14
➥vs. Wolverine	
341	4
342-349	2
350	5
➥1st Dale Keown	
351-371	2
372	3
373-376	2
377-378	3
379-384	2
385	4
386	3
387-391	2
392	3
393	4
394	3
395-399	2
400	3
401-418	2
418/Variant	3
419-425	2
425/Variant	4
426-448	2
449	8
450	5
451-474	2
Ann 1	115
Ann 2	40
Ann 3-4	25
Ann 5	9
Ann 6	7
Ann 7	9
Ann 8	5
Ann 9	3
Ann 10	4
Ann 11-19	3
Ann 20	4
Ann '97-'98	3
Ashcan 1	1
Incredible Hulk MARVEL, 1999 ➥Cont'd from Hulk	
12-20	3
21-24	2
25	3
26-33	2
34	13
➥Bruce Jones starts	
35	6
36-38	5
39-41	4
42-46	3
47-49	2
50	5
51	4
52-54	3
55-63	2
64	3
65-66	2
67-72	3
73-74	2
75-76	4
77-82	3
83	5
83/2nd	4
84	3
84/2nd	4
85-91	3
92	12
93-98	3
Ann 1999	5
Ann 2000	4
Ann 2001	3
Inferior Five DC, 1967	
1	24
2	16
3-10	14
11-12	10
Infinite Crisis DC, 2005	
1	6
1/2nd	4
1/RRP	450
2-4	6
5-7	4
Infinite Crisis Secret Files 2006 DC, 2006	
1	12
Iron Fist MARVEL, 1975	
1	35
2	12
3	10
4	8
4/30¢	20
5	8
5/30¢	20
6	8
6/30¢	20
7-13	8
13/35¢	10
14	80
➥1st Sabretooth	
14/35¢	150
15	27
➥X-Men app.	
15/35¢	75
Iron Man MARVEL, 1968	
1	250
2-4	60
5	55
6-7	50
8	40
9	90
10	42
11-12	35
13-17	27
18-20	25
21-30	20
31-40	15
41-42	12
43	35

Red Flags #1

The guys at Red Flags told me their series was named after the concept of a "red flag." Let's say you're on a first date and your date says something overtly racist; that would be a red flag. Naturally, I thought the comic was about dating.

RED FLAGS
WRITER:
JAMES HITCHCOCK
ARTIST:
JOE WILLY
B/W • 16 Pgs.
$1

Turns out it's actually trying to be a sort of modern *Tales from the Crypt.* The first story is about a kid that disappears. There is another about a modern incarnation of death.

The creators are off to a good start; for a dollar, you can't go wrong. Unfortunately, the dating concept would have been stronger. Moreover, this is a series with a text feature: a page of script. (If your comic isn't ready — especially your *first* comic book — don't solicit it. Finish the whole thing first. And, if you're thinking about putting a page of script in your comic book, don't. It is never, ever interesting. Comic books are a visual medium. If you want words to be the focus, write a novel.)

Joe Willy's art is functional but a little flat. Overall, not a bad first try.

★★ — **Tony DiGerolamo**

www.redflagpublishing.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Iron Man
CONTINUED
44 ... 12
45-46 ... 15
47 ... 35
➥Barry Smith art
48-50 ... 12
51 ... 17
52-53 ... 10
54 ... 16
55 ... 110
➥1st Thanos
56-67 ... 15
68-85 ... 10
85/30¢ ... 20
86 ... 10
86/30¢ ... 20
87 ... 10
87/30¢ ... 20
88 ... 10
88/30¢ ... 20
89 ... 10
89/30¢ ... 20
90-97 ... 10
98-99 ... 8
99/35¢ ... 15
100 ... 12
100/35¢ ... 18
101 ... 7
101/35¢ ... 12
102 ... 7
102/35¢ ... 12
103 ... 7
103/35¢ ... 12
➥Alcoholism issue
104-129 ... 7
130-149 ... 5
150 ... 7
151-153 ... 5
154 ... 7
155-159 ... 5
160 ... 7
161-170 ... 5
171-181 ... 3
182 ... 4
183-185 ... 3
186 ... 4
187-191 ... 3
192 ... 4
193-200 ... 3
201-224 ... 2
225-232/A ... 3
233-243 ... 2
244 ... 3
245-250 ... 2
251-257 ... 1
258-280 ... 2
281-282 ... 3
283-284 ... 2
285-287 ... 1
288 ... 3
289 ... 1
290 ... 4
291-299 ... 1
300 ... 3
300/Variant ... 4
301-304 ... 1
305-310 ... 2
310/Collector's ... 3
311-316 ... 2
317 ... 3
318-324 ... 2
325 ... 3
326-332 ... 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Ann 1 ... 27
Ann 2 ... 20
Ann 3 ... 10
Ann 4 ... 4
Ann 5-10 ... 3
Ann 11-13 ... 2
Ann 14-15 ... 3
Ashcan 1 ... 2

Iron Man
MARVEL, 1996
1-1/A ... 3
2-11 ... 2
12 ... 4
13 ... 3

Iron Man
MARVEL, 1998
1-1/A ... 4
2 ... 2
3-12 ... 2
13 ... 3
14-45 ... 2
46 ... 4
47-49 ... 2
50 ... 3
51-66 ... 2
67-83 ... 3
84 ... 8
85 ... 5
86-89 ... 3
Ann '98-'00 ... 4
Ann 2001 ... 3

Iron Man
MARVEL, 2004
1 ... 4
2-12 ... 3

Iron Man & Sub-Mariner
MARVEL, 1968
1 ... 100

JLA
DC, 1997
1 ... 6
2-6 ... 4
7-15 ... 3
16-40 ... 2
41 ... 3
42-49 ... 2
50 ... 4
51-74 ... 2
75 ... 4
76-99 ... 2
100 ... 4
101-106 ... 2
➥Post ID Crisis
107-108 ... 5
➥Post ID Crisis
109-114 ... 2
115 ... 12
➥ID Crisis follow-up
116 ... 5
117-125 ... 3
1000000 ... 2
Ann 1 ... 6
Ann 2 ... 5
Ann 3 ... 4
GS 1-2 ... 5
GS 3 ... 6

JLA/Avengers
MARVEL, 2003
1 ... 7
3 ... 6
3/2nd ... 7

John Carter, Warlord of Mars
MARVEL, 1977
1 ... 8
1/35¢ ... 15
2 ... 4
2/35¢ ... 8
3 ... 3

▲ #1

MARVEL TEAM-UP™

Two for the price of one

The "third" Spidey title of the late '70s and early '80s often served as Marvel's "trademark renewal theater," giving play to characters without titles of their own.

Spider-Man stars in every issue except for a few, which are noted at right in **black**, like #18. Otherwise, Spidey's co-star is listed with each issue at right.

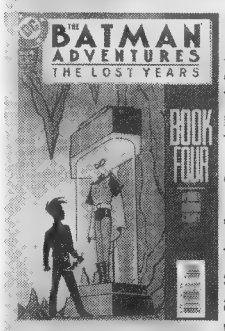
image © Marvel Characters Inc.

	Spider-Man and Human Torch team up			X-Men	The Vision	The Thing	Thor	The Cat	Iron Man	Human Torch
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
NM	MAR 72	MAY 72	JUL 72	SEP 72	NOV 72	JAN 73	MAR 73	APR 73	MAY 73	JUN 73
Price	$185	$30	$25	$45	$18	$16	$16	$16	$16	$16

THE BOTTOM LINE

RETROVIEW

Batman ... Lost Years #4 ★★★



DC
Apr 1998 • 22 pp.
Writer: Hilary J. Bader
Pencils: Bo Hampton
Inks: Terry Beatty
Cover: Ty Templeton

"As the Twig Is Bent"

A new Robin is born, as Tim Drake, the son of one of Two-Face's henchmen, discovers Batman's secrets.

Hilary Bader combines portions of Jason Todd's backstory with Tim Drake's in creating the new Robin. With Drake's name being one of the few things to come from the comics side, it doesn't feel right to give Drake a criminal background. I suppose it was to prevent confusion for casual fans who picked up another Batman title.

What's more questionable is how a costume that fit a fully grown Dick Grayson also worked for an adolescent Tim Drake.

© DC

No CGC copies

Then $1.95 NOW $2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

3/35¢ ... 8
4 ... 3
4/35¢ ... 8
5 ... 3
5/35¢ ... 8
6-28 ... 3
Ann 1-3 ... 2

Joker
DC, 1975
1 ... 16
2 ... 12
3-5 ... 8
6-9 ... 7

Jonah Hex
DC, 1977
1 ... 28
2 ... 10
3-5 ... 7
6 ... 6
7-8 ... 7
9-10 ... 5
11-20 ... 4
21-92 ... 3

Journey into Mystery
MARVEL, 1952
-1 ... 2
1 ... 3100
2 ... 950
3-4 ... 700
5 ... 800
6-11 ... 450
12-22 ... 350
23-32 ... 225
33 ... 250
34-40 ... 225
41-49 ... 200
50 ... 160
51-61 ... 155
62 ... 250
63-71 ... 145
72 ... 140
73 ... 200
74-81 ... 140
82 ... 160
83 ... 4500
➥1st Thor
83/Golden ... 60
84 ... 725
85 ... 450
86 ... 400
87 ... 600
88 ... 250

UNSLABBED Near Mint

89 ... 300
90 ... 150
91-92 ... 130
93 ... 160
94-96 ... 130
97 ... 325
98 ... 120
99 ... 105
100 ... 115
101 ... 150
102-108 ... 75
109 ... 90
110-111 ... 75
112 ... 210
➥Thor vs. Hulk
113-114 ... 75
115 ... 90
116 ... 75
117-125 ... 70
503-521 ... 2
Ann 1 ... 150

Journey into Mystery
MARVEL, 1972
1 ... 17
2-3 ... 7
4-5 ... 6
6-19 ... 5

JSA
DC, 1999
1 ... 5
2-36 ... 3
37 ... 4
38-49 ... 3
50 ... 4
51-57 ... 3
58 ... 4
59-66 ... 3
67 ... 7
➥Identity Crisis tie
68 ... 5
69-70 ... 4
71 ... 3
72 ... 4
73 ... 5
➥Inf. Crisis tie
74 ... 4
➥Inf. Crisis tie
75-87 ... 3
Ann 1 ... 5

JSA: Classified
DC, 2005
1/Conner ... 16

UNSLABBED Near Mint

1/Hughes ... 24
1/Sketch. ... 7
2 ... 9
2/Sketch. ... 4
3-4 ... 5
5-16 ... 3

Judomaster
CHARLTON, 1966
89 ... 12
90-98 ... 9

Jungle Action
MARVEL, 1972
1 ... 15
2-4 ... 7
5 ... 35
6 ... 12
7 ... 8
8 ... 15
9 ... 7
10-16 ... 6
17-21 ... 5
21/30¢ ... 20
22 ... 5
22/30¢ ... 20
23-24 ... 5

Justice League
DC, 1987
1 ... 6
2-3 ... 3
3/Ltd. ... 10
4-6 ... 2
Ann 1 ... 3

Justice League Adventures
DC, 2002
1 ... 3
2-34 ... 2

Justice League America
DC, 1989
0-50 ... 2
51-68 ... 1
69 ... 3
70-99 ... 2
100 ... 3
100/Variant ... 4
101-113 ... 2

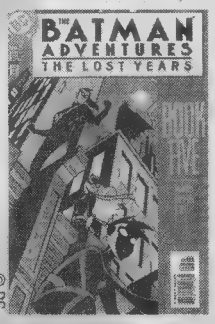
UNSLABBED Near Mint

Ann 4-8 ... 3
Ann 9 ... 4
Ann 10 ... 3
Special 1 ... 2
Special 2 ... 3

Justice League of America
DC, 1960
1 ... 5000
2 ... 1250
3 ... 1000
4 ... 700
5 ... 600
6-8 ... 400
9 ... 1000
➥JLA origin
10 ... 400
11-15 ... 250
16-20 ... 225
21 ... 350
➥Earth-2 visit
22 ... 325
23-30 ... 150
31 ... 100
32-33 ... 90
34-36 ... 75
➥Supes vs. Cap. Mrv.
37-39 ... 125
40-41 ... 75
42-45 ... 60
➥1st SA Sandman
46 ... 110
➥JSA app.
47 ... 95
48 ... 140
➥Giant issue
49-52 ... 60
53-54 ... 55
55 ... 115
➥JSA team-up
56 ... 100
➥JSA team-up
57-62 ... 55
63-66 ... 45
67 ... 60
➥Giant
68 ... 50
69-72 ... 45
➥Giant
73-81 ... 35
82 ... 45
➥G.A. Batman app
83-84 ... 30
85 ... 40
➥Giant
86-90 ... 25
91 ... 35

RETROVIEW

Batman ... Lost Years #5 ★★★★



DC
May 1998 • 22 pp.
Writer: Hilary Bader
Pencils: Bo Hampton
Inks: Terry Beatty
Cover: Ty Templeton

"You Can't Go Home Again"

Dick Grayson acquires the last new skills he needs to become Nightwing in exchange for returning a mystic statue stolen by Ra's al Ghul.

Hilary Bader wraps up the miniseries with a jump ahead of more than a year. Dick Grayson has acquired additional skills but seeks the secret of flight rumored to be held by a group of Tibetan monks. The monks also have a statue sought by Ra's al Ghul.

After being rescued by one of the monks, Dick returns to Gotham City and eventually reunites with Batman and The Dark Knight's new crew, making the team complete once again for a good sense of closure.

No CGC seller — Then $1.95 NOW $2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

92. 32
93. 25
➥Giant
94. 60
➥Sandman origin
95-99. 20
100. 65
101-106. 20
107-108. 25
109. 20
110-116. 25
117-125. 15
126-136. 10
137. 20
138-150. 7
151-165. 5
166-167. 12
168. 25
➥Mindwipe story
169-199. 5
200. 7
201-217. 3
218. 4
219. 3
220. 4
221-226. 3
227. 4
228-260. 3
261. 4
Ann 1. 5
Ann 2-3. 4

Justice League of America
DC, 2006
0-1. 6
2. 4
3. 3

Kid Eternity
QUALITY, 1946
1. 560
2. 290
3. 250
4-5. 175
6-10. 135
11-18. 105

King Kong
GOLD KEY, 1968
1. 12

Korak, Son of Tarzan
GOLD KEY, 1964
1. 65

UNSLABBED Near Mint

2-5. 45
6-11. 30
12-18. 25
19-37. 20
38-46. 17
47-51. 15
52-59. 10

Leading Comics
DC, 1941
1. 3500
2. 1100
3. 850
4-5. 675
6-10. 580
11-15. 440
16-22. 70
23. 110
24-30. 55
31-41. 40

League of Extraordinary Gentlemen
DC, 1999
1. 8
1/A-2. 5
3-5. 4
5/A. 65
➥Recalled edition
6. 4

League of Extraordinary Gentlemen
DC, 2002
1-6. 4

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1973
1. 15
2. 8
3-4. 7

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1980
259. 4
260-270. 3
271-284. 2
285. 3
286-296. 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

297. 3
298-309. 2
310. 3
311-313. 2
Ann 1. 3
Ann 2-3. 2

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1984
1. 5
2-5. 4
6-36. 2
37-38. 5
39-44. 2
45. 3
46-63. 2
Ann 1. 3
Ann 2-3. 2
Ann 4. 3

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1989
0. 2
1. 3
2-37. 2
38. 3
39-49. 2
50. 4
51-53. 2
54. 3
55-99. 2
100. 6
101-108. 2
109-123. 3
1000000. 4
Ann 1. 5
Ann 2-6. 4
Ann 7. 3

Limited Collectors' Edition
DC, 1973
C-20. 32
➥Rudolph
C-21. 16
C-22. 14
C-23. 16
C-24. 26
➥Rudolph
C-25. 28
➥Batman

UNSLABBED Near Mint

C-27. 16
C-29. 10
C-31. 15
C-32. 10
C-33. 16
C-34. 12
C-35. 10
C-36. 16
C-37. 20
➥Batman
C-38-C-39. . . 10
C-40. 12
C-41-C-43. . . 10
C-44. 12
C-45-C-47. . . 10
C-48. 12
C-49-C-50. . . 10
C-51. 12
C-52. 10
C-57-C-59. . . 14

Lone Ranger
DELL, 1948
1. 660
2. 360
3. 265
4-5. 230
6-7. 195
8. 275
➥Lone Ranger origin
9-10. 195
11-20. 138
21-30. 100
31-40. 75
41-50. 58
51-60. 50
61-70. 48
71-80. 38
81-100. 34
101-111. 30
112. 55
113-117. 45
118. 50
119-145. 45

Magnus, Robot Fighter
GOLD KEY, 1963
1. 200
2-3. 125
4-10. 60
11-20. 35
21-28. 20
29-45. 10
45/Whitman. . . . 18
46. 10

February Comics Birthdays

Feb. 1
Suzanne Gaffney
Nate Butler (1954)
Bill Mumy (1954)
Bill Spangler (1954)
Diana Schutz (1955)
Gilbert Hernandez (1957)
Ron Frenz (1960)

Feb. 2
Creig Flessel (1912)
Larry Wright (1940)

Bob Schreck (1955)

Feb. 3
Byron Erickson
Richard Marschall (1949)
Tim A. Conrad (1951)
Randy Lofficier (1953)

Feb. 4
Dez Skinn (1951)
Scott Saavedra (1960)
Tom Sniegoski (1962)
Francis J. Mao (1966)

Feb. 5
George Evans (1920)
Jess M. Jodloman (1925)
Marty Pahls (1941)
Val Semeiks (1955)
Mark Bloodworth (1963)
Kelly McQuain (1967)

Feb. 6
Richard Buckler (1949)

Feb. 7
Richard Bruning (1953)
Miguel Ferrer (1955)
Bob Camp (1956)
Paul Castiglia (1966)

Feb. 8
Terry Stewart

Feb. 9
Frank Frazetta (1928)
Danny Bulanadi (1946)
Jo Duffy (1954)
Timothy Truman (1956)
Sarah E. Byam (1962)
T.C. Ford (1964)
Whitney Barber (1975)

Feb. 10
Brent Frankenhoff (1966)

Feb. 11
Rich DuFour
Maily H. Wilkinson (1938)
Jim Bradrick (1946)
Shon Howell (1962)

Feb. 12
Joe Albelo
Ken Meyer Jr. (1957)
Lou Bank (1966)

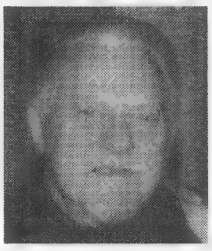
Feb. 13
Barb Kaalberg
John A. Peck (1962)
Stan Shaw (1962)

Feb. 14
Suzanne Dechnik
Carol Kalish
Oliver Harrington (1912)
Gordon Purcell (1959)
Joyce Greenholdt (1965)

Feb. 15
Albert DeGuzman
Joan Weis
Bud Gordinier (1933)
Art Spiegelman (1948)
Matt Groening (1954)
Les Dorscheid (1959)
Marc Hansen (1963)

Feb. 16
J.A. Fludd
Ron Wilson
Len Strazewski (1955)
John Totleben (1958)
Timothy Bradstreet (1967)

Feb. 17
David Fox



Curt Swan (1920-1996)
Bernd Metz (1944)
Nelson (1969)

Feb. 18
Gahan Wilson (1930)
Johnny Hart (1931)
Terry Echterling (1950)
Aaron McClellan (1959)
Jay Allen Sanford (1960)
Mark Bodé (1963)

Feb. 19
Henry Boltinoff (1914)
Don Glut (1944)
William Messner-Loebs (1949)
Bob Palin (1953)
Gerry Shamray (1957)
Jim Lawson (1960)
Mark Winfrey (1965)

Feb. 20
Anthony Tollin (1952)
Steve Oliff (1954)
Dave Roberts (1960)

Feb. 21
Barry Kaplan
Frank Brunner (1949)
Brian Douglas Ahern (1967)
Joseph M. Monks (1968)

Feb. 22
Doug Allen (1956)

Feb. 23
Ken Selig
Doug Moench (1948)
Jim Main (1955)
Eric Lurio (1957)
Janet Jackson (1958)
Martin Thomas (1965)

Feb. 24
Mindy Fisch
Bryan Talbot (1952)
Jim Borgman (1954)
Greg LaRocque (1954)
Keith S. "Kez" Wilson (1958)

Feb. 25
Arnold Roth (1929)
Rick Geary (1946)
Phil Lasorda (1960)

Feb. 26
Ron Aiken
Ric Estrada (1928)
David Boswell (1953)
Karen Berger (1958)
Jeffrey Butler (1958)

Feb. 27
Lisa Patrick
Norm Breyfogle (1960)
Jeff Smith (1960)
Andy Kubert (1962)
Eiwin Mark (1969)

Feb. 28
Joe Brozowski (J.J. Birch)

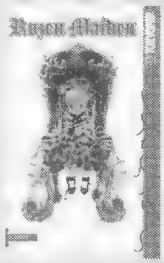
Feb. 29
Nelson Yomtov
Wendi Lee (1956)

Iron-Magnus $

The Inhumans	Werewolf	Captain America	Sub-Mariner	Ghost Rider	Captain Marvel	Mr. Fantastic	Human Torch/Hulk	Ka-Zar	Black Panther	Doctor Strange	Hawkeye	Iceman, X-Men	Brother Voodoo	Daredevil	Thor, Torch
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
JUL 73	AUG 73	SEP 73	OCT 73	NOV 73	DEC 73	JAN 74	FEB 74	MAR 74	APR 74	MAY 74	JUN 74	JUL 74	AUG 74	SEP 74	OCT 74
NM price $13	$18	$13	$13	$13	$13	$13	$13	$13	$13	$8	$8	$8	$8	$8	$8

Rozen Maiden Vol. 1

Internet e-commerce has been a boon to anti-social shoppers who'd rather loaf at home. Among them is the surly teen-age delinquent Jun. With his absentee parents out traveling, he tunes out his obsessively doting little sister and habitually orders phony New Age products just to return them and eke out cheap laughs.



TOKYOPOP
WRITER:
PEACH PIT
ARTIST:
PEACH PIT
B/W • 176 Pgs.
$9.99

But Jun gets stuck with his peculiar purchase from the "Spirit Hollier" of a "Rozen Maiden" windup doll named Shinku. Amazingly, Shinku comes to life and demands his fealty as her slave, lest he die! Suddenly, Shinku commands Jun's toys, reveals that his parents' mirror is a portal to an alternate reality, and staves off her intruding enemy Suiginton. Now, both of them must enter the "N-Field" to find her lost protective spirit.

Treating each other with selfishness and disdain, these characters invite little sympathy despite the Goth *shojo* style. Crafting a darker version of *DearS*, Peach Pit suggests a reason exists for Jun's hermit-like existence, but that isn't reason enough to care for this strange cast and dysfunctional toy story just yet.

★★ — **Oliver Chin**

RetroView JOHN CARTER, WARLORD OF MARS

MARVEL COMICS

Reviewed by Tim Lasiuta

Lights...Camera....Action! John Carter and Garathon turn away the Ptothian invasion as political intrigue places John Carter and Tars Tarkas up as traitors. John Carter, Dejah Thoris, and Tars Tarkas each face death in their battles only to emerge as victors over Mordin, the Master Assassin of Mars. Only John Carter could face two cancellations and survive to finish the Chris Claremont-written saga. Veteran artists Carmine Infantino, Sal Buscema, Mike Vosburg, and Ernie Chan contribute while Peter Gillis ends off this sought-after series with a classy story. Long live John Carter!

John Carter ™ Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc

COST TO OWN THE ORIGINALS IN NM: $29

Magnus Robot Fighter
VALIANT, 1991

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
0/Card	40
0/No card	30
1	10
2	8
3-4	5
➥Flip-book w/Rai #1	
5-6	6
7-8	4
9-10	3
11	6
12	20
➥1st Valiant Turok	
13-16	3
17-21	2
21/Gold	20
22-25	2
25/WVSS	15
26-35	1
36	2
37-43	1
44	3
45-54	2
55-57	3
57/error	10
58-60	3
61-62	4
63	5
64	12
YB 1	5

Man-Thing
MARVEL, 1974

1	30
2	14
3	10
4	8
5	10
6-10	5
11-22	3

Marvel Collectors' Item Classics
MARVEL, 1966

1	125
2	70
3-4	45
5-6	30
7-10	15
11-20	12
21-22	17
23	20

Marvel Family
FAWCETT, 1945

1	1100
2	525
3	425
4-5	315
6-10	265
11-20	200
21-30	165
31-40	135
41-70	100
71-81	85
82-89	75

Marvel Mystery Comics
MARVEL, 1939

2	30000
3	15000
4	12500
5	22500
6-7	7500
8	10000
9	25000
10	8000
11	3800
12	4000
13	5000
14-17	2500
18	2250
19-20	2500
21	2000
22-25	1700
26-30	1475
31-41	1325
42-48	1125
49	1450
50	1125
51-67	1000
68-78	860
79	810
80	1275
81	975
82	2250
83	810
84	1250
85	810
86	890
87	785
88-91	950
92	2500

Marvel Premiere
MARVEL, 1972

1	35
2	12
3	30
➥Dr. Strange	
4	10
5-6	8
7	15
8	10
9	6
10	9
11-12	5
13	8
14	12
15	80
➥1st Iron Fist	
16	20
➥2nd Iron Fist	
17-18	12
19-24	10
25	15
26	4
27	10
28	13
29	3
29/30¢	20
30	3
30/30¢	20
31	3
31/30¢	20
32-36	3
36/35¢	15
37	3
37/35¢	15
38	3
38/35¢	15
39-49	3
50	13
➥1st Alice Cooper	
51-56	3
57	5
58-61	3
59-65	3
65/35¢	15
66	3
66/35¢	15
67-80	3
81-105	2
Special 1	40
➥1966 one-shot	

Marvel Spotlight
MARVEL, 1971

1	25
2	130
➥1st Werewolf	
3-4	30
5	275
➥1st Ghost Rider	
6	45
7	35
8	25
9	30
10	35
11-12	22
13	12
14-15	10
16-19	7
20-21	5
22	6
23-24	5
25-27	3
27/30¢	20
28	10
28/30¢	18
29	9
29/30¢	15
30-31	3
32	50
➥1st Spider-Woman	
33	3

Marvel Super-Heroes
MARVEL, 1966

12	95
➥1st Captain Mar-vell	
13	50
14	75
➥Reprints 1st Kirby	
15	42
16	25
17	30
18	40
➥1st Guardians	
19	20
20	35
21-27	12
28-30	10
31	20
32	6
33-45	4
46-57	3
57/30¢	20
58	3
58/30¢	20

Marvel Team-Up
MARVEL, 1972

1	185
2	30
3	25
4	45
➥X-Men app.	
5	18
6-10	16
11	13
12	18
➥Werewolf app.	
13-20	13
21-31	8
32-44	5
44/30¢	20
45	5
45/30¢	20
46	5
46/30¢	20
47	4
47/30¢	20
48	4
48/30¢	20
49-52	4
53	15
➥X-Men app.	
54-58	4
58/35¢	15
59	4
59/35¢	15
60	4
60/35¢	15
61	4
61/35¢	15
62	4
62/35¢	15
63-65	4
66	7
➥Captain Britain app.	
67-94	4
95-99	3
100	6
101-136	3
137	4
138-143	3
144	4
145-150	3
Ann 1	30
Ann 2	6
Ann 3	4
Ann 4-6	3
Ann 7	2

Marvel Two-In-One
MARVEL, 1974

1	55
2	15
3	10
4	7
5-6	8
7-10	5
11-15	3
15/30¢	30
16	3
16/30¢	30
17	3
17/30¢	30
18	3
18/30¢	30
19-25	3
26-28	2
28/35¢	20
29	2
29/35¢	20
30	2
30/35¢	20
31	2
31/35¢	20
32-50	2
51	3
52-53	2
54	4
55-99	2
100	3
Ann 1	4
Ann 2	15
➥Warlock dies	
Ann 3-4	2
Ann 5	3
Ann 6-7	2

Marvel Zombies
MARVEL, 2006

1	55
1/2nd	35
1/3rd	12
2	16
3	6
3/2nd	4
4-5	3

Master of Kung Fu
MARVEL, 1974

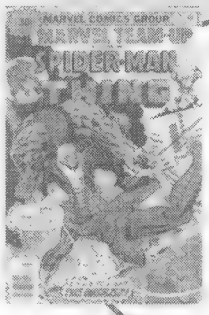
17	15
18	7
19-20	6
21-31	5
32-39	4
39/30¢	20
40	3
40/30¢	20
41	3
41/30¢	20
42	3
42/30¢	20
43	3
43/30¢	20
44-53	3
53/35¢	15
54	3
54/35¢	15
55	3
55/35¢	15
56	3
56/35¢	15
57	3
57/35¢	15
58-99	3
100	4
101-124	2
125	3
Ann 1	20

Metal Men
DC, 1963

1	500
2	225
3-5	150
6-10	80
11-20	55
21-26	45
27	80
➥Metal Men	
28-30	42
31-41	24
42-44	12
45-56	6

Metamorpho
DC, 1965

1	75
2	45
3	40
4-9	30
10-17	25



▲ #??

MARVEL TEAM-UP™

Back to the Basilisk

After encountering the transformed Basil Elks alongside Captain Marvel in *Marvel Team-Up* #16 and then Mr. Fantastic in #17, Spider-Man again ran into the villain whose eyes radiated power in *Marvel Team-Up* #47. This time, the wall-crawler partnered with The Thing. If the Basilisk had returned again, would it have signaled a Human Torch or Invisible Woman team-up?

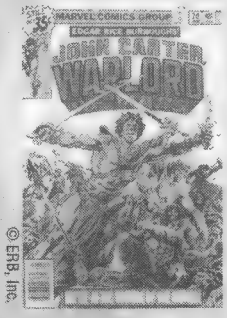
mage © Marvel Characters Inc.

	Hulk	Hercules	Iron Man, Torch	The Falcon	Iron Fist	Torch, Son of Satan	Night-hawk	Valkyrie	Torch, Dr. Strange	Franken-stein
	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
	NOV 74	DEC 74	JAN 75	FEB 75	MAR 75	APR 75	MAY 75	JUN 75	JUL 75	AUG 75
NM Price	$8	$8	$8	$8	$8	$5	$5	$5	$5	$5

THE BOTTOM LINE

John Carter #20

★★★



© ERB, Inc.

Marvel
Aug 1977 • 17 pp.
Writer: Chris Claremont
Pencils: Ernie Colon
Inks: Colon
Cover: Rudy Nebres

"Master Assassin of Mars, Part 5: Battle at the Bottom of the World"

John Carter and Garathon turn the tide on the Ptothian invasion, then plan their escape from Karanthor. Carter kills Chan Tomar.

Chris Claremont weaves a fine story with all elements at his disposal. Intrigue (Chan Tomar), deceit (Dejah Thoris), true love (Garathon), revenge, and action blend to make this a must-buy issue.

Ernie Colon displays his artistic skills and talent. Clear action scenes and passionate embraces are not beyond his creative pen. A fantastic cover by Rudy Nebres just adds to the issue.

Now! CGC copy: **9.8** **Then 35¢ NOW $3**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Mickey Mouse
DELL, 1953
28-30 40
31-35 30
36-40 25
41-50 20
51-60 16
61-70 15
71-80 14
81-100 12
101-120 11
121-140 10
141-160 8
161-180 7
181-200 6
201-203 5
204 8
205-206 5
207 20
208 50
209 20
210-214 7
215-218 10
219 12
220 4
221-240 3
241-256 2

Mickey Mouse and Friends
GEMSTONE, 2003
257-284 3

Mighty Samson
GOLD KEY, 1964
1 75
2-4 45
5-10 30
11-20 20
21-31 15
32 10

Military Comics
COMIC MAGAZINES, 1941
1 9000
2 2700
3 2150
4 1600
5 1375
6-7 1110
8-10 1000
11-12 875
13-15 760
16-20 650
21-22 560
23-43 465

Miracleman
ECLIPSE, 1985
1 10
2-4 8
4/Gold 15
5 8
5/Platinum 15
6-8 8
8/Gold 15
9-10 10
11-12 14
13 18
14 24
15 35
16 16
17 25
17/Gold 40
18 20
19-22 15
23 16
24 25
3D 1 10
3D 1/Gold 18

More Fun Comics
DC, 1936
➥Was New Fun
7-8 5600
9 6500
10 3250
11 2850
12-13 2450
14 12500
➥1st Dr. Occult
15-16 5000
17 4500
18-20 2150
21-25 1950
26-29 1775
30-40 1625
41-45 1325
46-50 1200
51 5000
➥Spectre cameo
52 54000
➥1st Spectre story
53 35000
54 9700
55 12400
➥1st Dr. Fate
56 4400
57-59 3100
59/15¢ 4500
60 3100
61-64 2500
65-66 2660
67 6850
68-70 2100
71 5750
72 1725
73 12200
➥1st Aquaman, G A
74 2450
75-80 1725
81-88 1150
89 1325
90-99 940
100 1060
101 7850
➥1st Superboy
102 1375
103 1025
104-105 760
106-107 650
108-110 165
111-120 140
121-124 115
125 575
➥Superman cover
126 115
127 225

Ms. Marvel
MARVEL, 1977
1 8
2-6 3
6/35¢ 15
7 3
7/35¢ 15
8 3
8/35¢ 15
9 3
➥1st Mystique
9/35¢ 15
10 3
10/35¢ 15
11-15 2
16 15
➥Mystique cameo
17 8
18 40
➥1st Mystique
19 3
20-23 2

My Greatest Adventure
DC, 1955
1 1250
2 600
3-4 425
5-10 325
11-14 200
15-17 250
18 300
19 200
20-21 225
22-27 175
28 200
29-30 150
31-40 125
41-61 100
62-79 75
80 425
➥1st Doom Patrol
81-85 150

Nature Boy
CHARLTON, 1956
3 55
4-5 50

New Avengers
MARVEL, 2005
1 7
1/Retailer ed. . 70
➥Spider-Man cover
1/DirCut 5
1/Quesada 12
1/Finch 9
1/2nd 3
2 2
2/Hairsine 45
3 2
3/Wolverine . . . 45
4 3
4/Cheung 15
4/DF 20
5 2
5/Granov 15
6 2
6/Hitch 15
7 7
7/Adams 25
8 3
8/Romita 20
9 3
9/Trimpe 15
10-23 3
Ann 1 4

New Book of Comics
DC, 1937
1 13000
2 6500

New Comics
DC, 1935
1 16000
2 10000
3-7 3000
8-11 2750

New Funnies
DELL, 1942
65 475
66-70 255
71-75 175
76 550
77-80 145
81-90 115
91-100 75
101-110 54
111-120 42
121-130 34
131-150 26
151-170 18
171-190 15
191-220 12
221-240 10
241-260 8
272-288 6

Nick Fury, Agent of SHIELD
MARVEL, 1968
1 75
2-5 40
6-8 30
9-13 25
14 20
15 50
➥1st Bullseye
16-18 20

Nightwing
DC, 1996
1/2 4
1/2/Platinum 7
1 11
2 6
3-5 4
6-15 3
16-49 2
50 4
51-98 2
99 3
100 4
101-106 5
➥Year 1
107-108 2
109-124 3
1000000 2
Ann 1 5
GS 1 6

Not Brand Echh
MARVEL, 1967
1 45
2 18
3-5 15
6-8 10
➥Giant issues start
9-13 25

Nova
MARVEL, 1976
1 8
2 4
3-10 3
10/35¢ 15
11 3
11/35¢ 15
12 3
12/35¢ 15
13 3
13/35¢ 15
14 3
14/35¢ 15
15-25 3

OMAC
DC, 1974
1 40
2 15
3 12
4 10
5-8 7

OMAC Project
DC, 2005
1 22
1/2nd 7
1/3rd 3
2 6
2/2nd 3
3 4
4-6 3

Our Army at War
DC, 1952
1 1500
2 750
3-4 600
5-7 500
8-11 400
12 325
13 400
14 325
15-19 300
20 275
21-31 200
32-40 175
41-50 125
51-70 100
71-80 75
81 2500
➥1st Sgt. Rock
82 650
83 1800
➥1st Kubert Rock
84 300
85 350
86-87 300
88 325
89-90 300
91 700
➥1st all-Rock issue
92-100 175
101-112 125
113-118 150
119 125
120-121 80
122-125 75
126 100
127 75
128 275
➥Sgt. Rock Origin
129-133 75
134-137 60
138-150 50
151 350
➥1st Enemy Ace
152 50
153 140
➥2nd Enemy Ace
154 40
155 75
➥3rd Enemy Ace
156-157 40
158 60
➥1st Iron Major
159-163 40
164 80
➥Giant-sized
165-167 40
168 90
➥1st Unknown Soldier
169-176 30
177 50
178-181 30
182-183 40
184-185 30
186 40
187-189 30
190 40
191-198 25
199-202 20
203 35
➥Giant
204-215 20
216 55
➥Giant-sized
217-228 15
229 35
➥Giant-sized
230-234 15
235-240 25
241 15
242 20
➥100-page issue
243-253 15
254 18
255 15
256 18
257 15
258-271 10
272 15
273-301 10

Phantom Stranger
DC, 1952
1 1500
2 1000
3-6 750

Phantom Stranger
DC, 1969
1 125
2-3 60
4 70
5-7 50
8-13 40
14-17 35
18-21 25
22-41 15

Power Man & Iron Fist
MARVEL, 1974
17 8
18-20 5
21-30 4
30/30¢ 20
31 4
31/30¢ 20
32 3
32/30¢ 20
33 3
33/30¢ 20
34 3
34/30¢ 20
35-44 3
44/35¢ 15
45 3
45/35¢ 15
46 3
46/35¢ 15
47 3
47/35¢ 15
48 10
49-50 6
51-52 3
53-55 4
56 3

Flashback 2002

5 years ago in CBG...

#1472 FEBRUARY 1 2002

Legendary artist **John Buscema** died on Jan. 10 of stomach cancer at age 74. He was a longtime Marvel artist dating to 1948, when Marvel when known as Timely. He worked on such classic and popular titles as *The Incredible Hulk, Silver Surfer, Amazing Spider-Man, Fantastic Four, Wolverine*, and *Conan*.

#1473 FEBRUARY 8 2002

CBG answered the question, "Who is Jim Sasseville?" in its feature on the ghost artists who had worked on **Charles Schulz'** ***Peanuts***.

#1474 FEBRUARY 15 2002

At a Jan. 9 press conference, artist **Alex Ross** unveiled the Academy Awards poster he'd created for the 2002 Oscars ceremony. Comics creator **Mark Evanier** wrote about the unveiling for ***CBG***.

#1475 FEBRUARY 22 2002

Howard Cruse's ***Stuck Rubber Baby*** received the Critic's Choice award at the Angoulême comics festival in France.

— By Ray Sidman
from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

Man-Wolf | Beast | Human Torch | Sons of the Tiger | Scarlet Witch | Vision, Witch | Doctor Doom | Moondragon | Killraven | Deathlok | The Thing

	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	44/30¢	45	45/30¢	46	46/30¢	47	47/30¢
NM Price	SEP 75 $5	OCT 75 $5	NOV 75 $5	DEC 75 $5	JAN 76 $5	FEB 76 $5	MAR 76 $5	APR 76 $5	APR 76 $20	MAY 76 $6	MAY 76 $20	JUN 76 $5	JUN 76 $20	JUL 76 $4	JUL 76 $20

Magnus-Power $

Saiyuki Reload #3

In round two with their contract with God, the four are bound for the mythic city of Shangri-La. As before, going West is easier said than done, since demonic "youkai" still abound. Moreover, past foes reappear; these include the resurrected youkai prince Kougaiji and his faithful bodyguard Dokugakuji and alchemist Yaone, who send Goku and his pals the anti-priest Sanzo, roguish Gojyo, and chi master Hakkai literally up the creek.

TOKYOPOP
WRITER:
KAZUYA MINEKURA
ARTIST:
KAZUYA MINEKURA
B/W • 208 Pgs.
$9.99

In flashback come tales from the era before the quartet ever united, including backstory on Sanzo's: teacher, old villain, keystone experience that changed his personality, and first encounter with the monkey boy Goku. Last but not least is a humorous celebration marking the first year of the party's travels together.

This series rebounds into action-adventure terrain from the philosophical meandering of earlier volumes. With her work also adapted into an anime by Geneon, Minekura rewards her loyal readers with her expected concoction of fisticuffs, flippancy, and fable-twisting.

★★★ **— Oliver Chin**

www.tokyopop.com

#48/30¢

MARVEL TEAM-UP™

Proof you'll soon pay more

Several issues of Marvel's titles from the 1970s had special "variant editions" with higher cover prices, test-marketed in specific areas of the country. Those "tests" always seemed to work, as prices soon went up for everything.

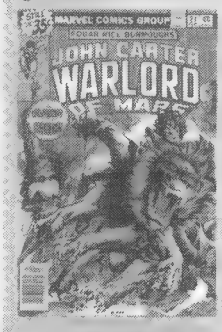
Marvel Team-Up was no exception; the 30¢ variants of #44-48 each bring about $20 today.

image © Marvel Characters Inc.

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Power Man & Iron Fist CONTINUED	
57	12
58-65	3
66 ➥2nd Sabretooth	20
67-77	2
78	5
79-83	2
84 ➥Sabretooth app.	6
85-125	2
Ann 1	4
Primer COMICO, 1982	
1	5
2 ➥1st Grendel	55
3-4	4
5 ➥1st Sam Kieth art	50
6	5
Rangers Comics FICTION HOUSE, 1941	
1	2750
2	850
3	650
4-5	500
6-12	425
13-19	350
20-24	300
25-29	250
30-39	175
40-59	120
60-69	90
Rawhide Kid MARVEL, 1955	
1	800
2	350
3-5	185
6-10	140
11-16	110
17 ➥Origin, Kirby art	400
18-21	95
22	90
23 ➥Origin retold, Kirby	200
24-30	90
31-44	75
45	90
46	60
47-60	35
61-70	25
71-86	18
87-92	15
93-99	12
100	18
101-113	12
114-120	10
121-133	7
133/30¢	20
134	7
134/30¢	20
135-140	7
140/35¢	15
141-151	6
Special 1	12

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Red Sonja MARVEL, 1976	
1	8
2-4	3
4/35¢	20
5	3
5/35¢	20
6	3
7-15	2
Red Sonja DYNAMITE COMICS, 2005	
0/Black-0/White	3
0/Ross	30
0/Sketch	150
0/Foil	10
0/Authentix	20
0/DF	25
1	20
1/Rivera	25
1/Adams	35
1/Linsner	125
1/Ross	40
1/Rubi	20
1/DF	35
2-4	0
5	3
6-8	0
Richie Rich HARVEY, 1960	
1	3250
2	950
3	500
4-5	375
6-9	250
10	175
11-15	125
16-20	90
21-30	65
31-40	45
41-49	35
50-60	25
61-70	20
71-88	15
89-102	10
103-126	7
127-159	5
160-200	3
201-254	2
Rima, the Jungle Girl DC, 1974	
1	13
2-7	7
Rip Hunter... Time Master DC, 1961	
1	350
2	140
3	115
4-5	95
6-7	85
8-15	70
16-20	58
21-25	48
26-29	40
Robin DC, 1993	
0	2
1-1/Variant	4
2-14	2
14/Variant	3

RETROVIEW
John Carter #21 ★★★



Marvel
Feb 1979 • 17 pp.
Writer: Chris Claremont
Pencils: Ernie Colón
Inks: Frank Springer
Cover: Rudy Nebres

"Master Assassin of Mars, Part 6: The Lady and the Lion"

John Carter and Dejah Thoris are captured while trying to escape. Carter defeats a Banth to save her, and Dejah kills Chan Tomar.

What a twisted adventure! Escape. Capture. Escape. Capture. Escape. Add romance and you have "Master Assassin of Mars." This issue keeps the reader guessing, and, even after the death of the tyrant Chan Tomar at the hands of Thoris and the proclamation of Gar Karus as Jeddak, you'd think they could leave. Nope. Turn of events, and one more time both hero and heroine face death at the hands of the ancient laws.

© ERB, Inc.

Best CGC copy: **9.8** **Then 35¢ NOW $3**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
15-49	2
50	3
51-74	2
75	3
76-99	2
100	4
101-125	2
126 ➥Robin quits	5
127 ➥New Robin	4
128	3
129-139	2
140-154	3
1000000	4
Ann 3	3
Ann 4	4
Ann 5	3
Ann 6	4
GS 1	6
Sad Sack HARVEY, 1949	
1	500
2	250
3	125
4-10	100
11-19	70
20	50
21-30	35
31-40	25
41-50	15
51-70	10
71-90	8
91-100	5
101-150	3
151-287	2
288-289	3
290-293	2
3D 1	125
Saga of the Swamp Thing DC, 1982	
1	3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
2-19	2
20 ➥Alan Moore starts	15
21	12
22-25	6
26-32	4
33	3
34	5
35-36	3
37 ➥1st Hellblazer	55
38	15
39-40	9
41-45	4
Ann 1	3
Ann 2	4
Ann 3	3
Sandman DC, 1974	
1	15
2	7
3-6	4
Sandman DC, 1989	
1	25
2-3	12
4-7	4
8 ➥1st Death	15
8/Ltd.	35
9-14	4
15-21	3
22	4
23-49	3
50	5
50/Gold	20
51-74	3
75	4
Special 1	5
Savage Dragon IMAGE, 1992	
1-3	3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Savage Dragon IMAGE, 1993	
0	2
1/2	3
1/2/Platinum	4
1-3	3
4-12	2
13-13/A	3
14	2
15-24	3
25-25/A	4
26-49	3
50	6
51/A-74	3
75	6
76-99	3
100	9
101-106	3
107	4
108-123	3
125	5
126-128	3
Scooby Doo, Where Are You? GOLD KEY, 1970	
1	100
2-8	50
9-19	25
20-30	15
Sea Devils DC, 1961	
1	500
2	300
3	200
4-5	125
6-13	75
14-20	50
21-35	35
Secret Agent GOLD KEY, 1966	
1	40
2	25
Secret Origins DC, 1961	
Ann 1	400

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Secret Origins DC, 1973	
1	18
2	8
3-4	7
5-7	6
Secret Origins DC, 1986	
1	5
2-50	2
Ann 1	3
Ann 2-3	2
GS 1	5
Special 1	2
Secret Six DC, 1968	
1	45
2	15
3-5	12
6	15
7	20
Secret Society of Super-Villains DC, 1976	
1	10
2-8	5
9-15	3
Secret War MARVEL, 2004	
1	10
1/2nd	5
1/3rd	4
2	6
2/2nd	4
3	5
4-5	4
Sensational Spider-Man MARVEL, 1996	
-1	2
0	5
1	2
1/Collector's	4
2-11	2
11/Collector's	7
12-24	2
25-25/A	3

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

	48	48/30¢	49	50	51	52	53	54	54/Whit	55
	Iron Man		Iron Man, Dr. Strange	Iron Man, Dr. Strange	Iron Man	Captain America	Hulk, X-Men	Hulk		Warlock
	AUG 76	AUG 76	SEP 76	OCT 76	NOV 76	DEC 76	JAN 77	FEB 77	FEB 77	MAR 77
NM Price	$4	$20	$4	$4	$4	$4	$15	$4	$4	$4

RETROVIEW
John Carter #22
★★★

© ERB, Inc.

"Master Assassin of Mars, Part 7: Climb of Freedom"

John Carter and Dejah Thoris escape execution and climb a vertical cliff. Just when they think they are safe, The Assassin of Mars finds them.

Out of the frying pan into — what? The Master Assassin of Mars? Just when you think enough is enough, death again faces Carter and Thoris.

This series is a true cliffhanger. Exciting action, uncertain endings, and enough of the prince and princess of Mars to keep the reader interested: Claremont has outdone himself in this issue, and the meeting of the Assassin's ship on the last page catches readers unawares.

Marvel
Mar 1979 • 17 pp.
Writer: Chris Claremont
Pencils: Mike Vosburg
Inks: Ric Villamonte
Cover: Rudy Nebres

No CGC copies
Then 35¢ NOW $3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

26-33 ... 2
Ann 1996 ... 3

Sgt. Fury
MARVEL, 1963
1 ... 1500
2 ... 400
3-5 ... 225
6-10 ... 150
11-12 ... 100
13 ... 500
➥Cap. America app.
14-15 ... 80
16-19 ... 75
20-23 ... 50
24 ... 30
25-27 ... 50
28-31 ... 40
32-38 ... 25
39-40 ... 20
41-63 ... 15
64-99 ... 12
100 ... 25
101 ... 12
102 ... 10
103-110 ... 8
111-121 ... 6
122-131 ... 5
132-133 ... 4
133/30¢ ... 20
134 ... 4
134/30¢ ... 20
135-141 ... 4
141/35¢ ... 15
142 ... 4
142/35¢ ... 15
143-151 ... 4
152-167 ... 3
Ann 1 ... 125
Ann 2 ... 55
Ann 3 ... 30
Ann 4 ... 22
Ann 5 ... 10
Ann 6-7 ... 9

Sgt. Rock
DC, 1977
302 ... 25
303-307 ... 15
308-312 ... 10
313-320 ... 8
321-330 ... 6
331-341 ... 5
342-350 ... 4
351-390 ... 3
391-422 ... 2

Ann 1-2 ... 4
Ann 3-4 ... 3

Shadow
ARCHIE, 1964
1 ... 30
2-8 ... 18

Shadow
DC, 1973
1 ... 12
2-3 ... 8
4 ... 6
5 ... 4
6 ... 5
7-12 ... 4

Shazam!
DC, 1973
1 ... 20
2-7 ... 10
8 ... 20
➥100-page issue
9-17 ... 10
18-35 ... 7

She-Hulk
MARVEL, 2004
1 ... 12
2 ... 7
3 ... 4
4-12 ... 3

She-Hulk
MARVEL, 2005
1-7 ... 3
8 ... 12
9-10 ... 3

SHIELD
MARVEL, 1973
1 ... 15
2-5 ... 5

Shogun Warriors
MARVEL, 1979
1 ... 5
2-20 ... 2

Showcase
DC, 1956
1 ... 3500
2-3 ... 1000
4 ... 27500
➥1st Silver Age Flash
5 ... 1000
6 ... 4000
7 ... 2000
8 ... 11500
➥2nd SA Flash
9 ... 7500
10 ... 3000
11-12 ... 1750
13-14 ... 4500
15 ... 2000
16 ... 1000
17 ... 2750
➥1st Adam Strange
18 ... 1200
19 ... 1500
20 ... 1000
21 ... 500
22 ... 5600
➥1st SA Grn. Lantern
23-24 ... 1750
25-26 ... 350
27 ... 900
28-29 ... 400
30 ... 800
31-32 ... 400
33 ... 375
34 ... 1250
35 ... 700
36 ... 525
37 ... 700
38 ... 400
39 ... 350
40 ... 300
41-42 ... 150
43 ... 450
44 ... 100
45 ... 325
46-47 ... 100
48-52 ... 80
53-54 ... 100
55 ... 275
➥Dr Fate origin
56 ... 125
57 ... 225
58 ... 150
59 ... 125
60 ... 225
➥Spectre origin
61 ... 100
62 ... 80
63 ... 50
64 ... 100
➥Spectre app.
65 ... 50
66-72 ... 30
73 ... 85
➥1st Creeper
74 ... 45
➥1st Anthro
75 ... 75
➥1st Hawk & Dove
76-77 ... 50
78 ... 35
79-81 ... 45
82-84 ... 40
85-87 ... 20
88-93 ... 15
94 ... 20
➥New Doom Patrol
95-96 ... 8
97-103 ... 6
104 ... 5

Silver Surfer
MARVEL, 1968
1 ... 375
2 ... 160
3 ... 135
4 ... 265
➥Surfer vs. Thor
5-6 ... 75
7 ... 90
8 ... 95
9-10 ... 60
11 ... 65
12 ... 50
13 ... 70
14 ... 125
➥Spider-Man app.
15-18 ... 55

Simpsons Comics
BONGO, 1992
1 ... 5
2 ... 4
3-10 ... 3
11-31 ... 2
32 ... 3
33-39 ... 2
40-109 ... 3

Sinister House of Secret Love
DC, 1971
1 ... 125
2-4 ... 75

Six Million Dollar Man
CHARLTON, 1976
1 ... 12
2 ... 6
3-5 ... 5
6-9 ... 4

Six Million Dollar Man
CHARLTON
1 ... 10
2 ... 8
3-7 ... 5

Skull the Slayer
MARVEL, 1975
1 ... 12
2 ... 5
3 ... 2
4-5 ... 4
5/30¢ ... 20
6 ... 3
6/30¢ ... 20
7-8 ... 3

Sonic the Hedgehog
ARCHIE, 1993
0 ... 9
1 ... 12
2-3 ... 9
4-5 ... 7
6-10 ... 6
11-20 ... 4
21-50 ... 3
51-166 ... 2
Special 1 ... 3
Special 2-15 ... 2

Son of Satan
MARVEL, 1975
1 ... 20
2 ... 15
3 ... 10
3/30¢ ... 15
4 ... 10
4/30¢ ... 15
5 ... 10
5/30¢ ... 15
6-8 ... 10

Space Action
ACE, 1952
1 ... 525
2-3 ... 350

Space: 1999
CHARLTON, 1975
1 ... 10
2-4 ... 7
5-7 ... 5

Space Adventures
CHARLTON, 1952
1 ... 240
2 ... 125
3-5 ... 105
6-9 ... 90
10-12 ... 225
13-19 ... 90
20 ... 110
21 ... 80
23 ... 100
24-32 ... 70
33 ... 325
➥1st Captain Atom
34 ... 150
35-40 ... 125
41 ... 25
42 ... 75
43-50 ... 25
51-60 ... 18
61-72 ... 12

Space Family Robinson
GOLD KEY, 1962
1 ... 225
2 ... 100
3-5 ... 75
6-10 ... 50
11-15 ... 35
16-20 ... 25
21-44 ... 20
45-54 ... 10
55-59 ... 6

Space Ghost
GOLD KEY, 1967
1 ... 150

Spawn
IMAGE, 1992
1 ... 5
1/A ... 3
2 ... 4
3-6 ... 3
7-9 ... 4
10-50 ... 3
51-97 ... 2
98-99 ... 3
100/A ... 6
100/B-100/F ... 5
101-149 ... 3
150 ... 5
151-160 ... 3
Ann 1 ... 5
Fan ed. 1-3 ... 1

Special Marvel Edition
MARVEL, 1971
1 ... 20
2-4 ... 15
5-14 ... 7
15 ... 45
➥1st Shang-Chi
16 ... 18

Spectacular Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1976
-1 ... 2
1 ... 25
2 ... 15
3 ... 8
4-7 ... 5
7/35¢ ... 15
8 ... 5
8/35¢ ... 15
9 ... 5
9/35¢ ... 15
10 ... 4
10/35¢ ... 15
11 ... 4
11/35¢ ... 15
12-20 ... 4
21-26 ... 3
➥1st Miller Daredevil
27-28 ... 15
➥2nd Miller Daredevil
29-55 ... 3
56 ... 5
57-63 ... 3
64 ... 5
➥1st Cloak & Dagger
65-82 ... 3
83 ... 7
➥Punisher app.
84 ... 3
85 ... 5
86-99 ... 3
100 ... 5
101 ... 3
102-115 ... 2
116 ... 3
117-129 ... 2
130 ... 3
131 ... 5
132 ... 4
133 ... 3
134-142 ... 2
143 ... 4
144-146 ... 2
147 ... 8
➥New Hobgoblin
148 ... 2
149 ... 3
150-157 ... 2
158 ... 5
159 ... 4
160-188 ... 2
189 ... 4
190-195 ... 2
195/Collector's ... 3
196-199 ... 2
200 ... 4
201-213 ... 2
213/Collector's ... 3
214-217 ... 2

Flashback 1997

10 years ago in CBG...

#1212 FEBRUARY 7 1997
SyCo Distributions announced it would begin operations in April. Clients for the comic-book distributor included **Kitchen Sink**, **Sirius**, and **Warp Graphics**.

#1213 FEBRUARY 14 1997
A museum in Massachusetts opened its exhibit based on **Joe Kubert**'s critically acclaimed graphic novel, ***Fax from Sarajevo***. The Words & Pictures Museum located in Northhampton ran the exhibit from Feb. 6 through April 6.

#1214 FEBRUARY 21 1997
Following up on the success of their co-created **Amalgam Universe** in 1996, **Marvel** and **DC** teamed again, announcing 12 more Amalgam titles for release on April 2. The titles included ***Iron Lantern***, ***Generation Hex***, ***Challengers of the Fantastic***, and ***Super-Soldier: Man of War***.

#1215 FEBRUARY 28 1997
Regarding another comic-book film that never made it off the page. On Feb. 6, *Daily Variety* reported that **Neil Gaiman** would adapt his Vertigo book, ***Death: The High Cost of Living***, for theatrical release through Warner Bros. The project had been optioned by the studio, which said Gaiman might direct.

— By Ray Sidman
from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

Warlock · Daredevil · Black Widow · Ghost Rider · Wasp, Yellowjacket · Wasp · Human Torch

NM Price: 55/Whit MAR 77 $4 · 56 APR 77 $4 · 56/Whit APR 77 $4 · 57 MAY 77 $4 · 57/Whit MAY 77 $4 · 58 JUN 77 $4 · 58/Whit JUN 77 $4 · 58/35¢ JUN 77 $15 · 59 JUL 77 $4 · 59/Whit JUL 77 $4 · 59/35¢ JUL 77 $15 · 60 AUG 77 $4 · 60/Whit AUG 77 $4 · 60/35¢ AUG 77 $15 · 61 SEP 77 $4 · 61/Whit SEP 77 $4

Spider-Man: Reign #1

MARVEL
WRITER:
KAARE ANDREWS
ARTIST:
KAARE ANDREWS
Color • 48 Pgs.
$3.99

No doubt about it, *Spider-Man: Reign* is Marvel's version of Frank Miller and Klaus Janson's *Batman: The Dark Knight*. Creator Kaare Andrews even pays homage to the groundbreaking Batman tale by naming a news anchor "Miller Janson." Unfortunately, this first issue, despite its depressing storyline and obvious sense of sincerity, reads like a parody at times.

An aging, decrepit Peter Parker finds himself broke, unemployed, and disrespected, just as in his younger days. Parker has long since given up the super-hero biz and he deeply misses Mary Jane, who has died and appears only in fantasy sequences. Patrolled with an iron fist by masked, government-sanctioned fascists called "The Reign," New York has become a virtually crime-free dystopia. The city is led by a mayor who announces a "temporary suspension to the electoral process" in order to fight terrorists.

Parallels with the Bush administration's War on Terror are unavoidable, and the *Dark Knight* influence permeates every page, but the whole thing is hard to take seriously, thanks in part to pseudo-hardboiled dialogue that rarely rings true.

★★ **— Brett Weiss**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Spectacular Spider-Man CONTINUED
217/Variant 3
218-219 2
220-221 3
222. 2
223-223/Variant . 3
224. 2
225. 5
225/Variant 4
226-228 2
229. 3
229/Variant-230. 4
231-249 2
250. 3
251-255 2
255/Variant 5
256-263 2
Ann 1 5
Ann 2 4
Ann 3-7 3
Ann 8 4
Ann 9-'97 3
Special 1 4

Spectacular Spider-Man MARVEL, 2003
1. 4
1/CanExpo 6
2-3 3
4. 4
5-7 3
8-13 2
14. 3
15. 7
➥Avngrs Disassmbled
16. 5
➥Avngrs Disassmbled
17-19 2
20. 3
➥Organic webshooters
21-27 2

Spectre DC, 1967
1. 150
2. 60
3-5 50
6-10 40

Spectre DC, 1987
1-5 3
6-31 2
Ann 1 3

Spectre DC, 1992
0. 3
1. 6
2. 5
3. 4
4-7 3
8. 4
9-20 3
21-36 2
37-62 3
Ann 1 4

Spectre DC, 2001
1-27 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Spider-Girl MARVEL, 1998
0. 2
1/2 3
1-1/A 4
2-5 3
6-24 2
25. 3
26-58 2
59-74 3
75. 8
76-99 3
100. 4
Ann '99 4

Spider-Man MARVEL, 1990
-1 2
1/2 4
1/2/Platinum. . . . 6
1-1/Collector's . . . 5
1/Platinum 42
1/Silver 5
2-8 3
9. 6
10. 4
11-12 3
13. 5
14. 3
15-25 2
26. 4
27-46 2
46/Collector's . . . 3
47-49 2
50. 3
50/Variant 4
51-51/Variant. . . 3
52-56 2
57-57/Variant. . . 3
58-74 2
75. 4
76-98/B 2
Ann '97-'98 . . . 3
GS 1. 4
Holiday 1995 . . 3

Spider-Woman MARVEL, 1978
1. 6
2-3 3
4-36. 2
➥1st Siryn
37-38. 4
➥X-Men app.
39-49. 1
50. 4

Spidey Super Stories MARVEL, 1974
1. 20
➥Spider-Man origin
2. 6
3-57 5

Spirit QUALITY, 1944
1. 600
2. 350
3. 250
4-5 185
6-10 150
11. 125
12-17 200
18-21 250
22. 350

Spirit FICTION HOUSE, 1952
1. 250
2. 225
3-4 175
5. 200

#74

MARVEL TEAM-UP™

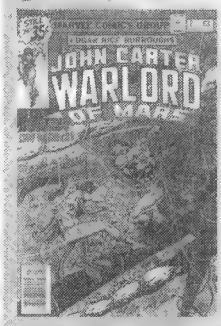
Live from New York ...

Believe it or not, there were Saturdays back in the '70s, too — and one TV show was popular enough to make a one-time comics crossover.

Saturday Night Live's Not Ready for Prime Time Players, featuring John Belushi, teamed with Spidey in #74. Belushi's samurai helped Spider-Man fight the Silver Samurai.

image © Marvel Characters Inc.

RETROVIEW
John Carter #23 ★★★



Marvel
Apr 1979 • 17 pp.
Writer: Chris Claremont
Pencils: Mike Vosburg
Inks: Ricardo Villamonte
Cover: Ernie Chan

"Master Assassin of Mars, Part 8: The Man Who Makes Murder!"

Dejah Thoris, masquerading as Daria to save Carter, fights for her life only to be discovered and face "The One!"

Wow, last issue John Carter did all the work. This time, it's Dejah Thoris who takes center stage with her disguise as Daria, master assassin. She manages to "fight" Carter, and relay all she has known since Carter's "death." She faces four deadly Assassins with swords, only to be unmasked as the princess.

What a great twist! Good action, good dialogue, and better-than-adequate art from Mike Vosburg and Ric Villamonte.

© ERB, Inc.

Buy CGC copy 9.6 **Then 35¢ NOW $3**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Spoof MARVEL, 1970
1. 15
2. 7
3. 8
4-5 7

Spy Smasher FAWCETT, 1941
1. 2500
2. 750
3-7 450
8-9 350
10. 375
11. 350

Star Spangled Comics DC, 1941
1. 4500
2. 1800
3. 1000
4-5 875
6. 800
7. 8000
➥1st Newsboy Legion
8-10 1600
11-16 1175
17. 1500
18-19 1000
20-30 850
31-40 525
41-50 425
51-60 400
61-64 375
65. 1050
➥Robin stories start
66-68 690
69. 800
➥1st Tomahawk
70. 690
71-80 575
81-83 450
84. 625
85-86 450
87. 625
88-94 500
95-99 265
100. 300
101-110 225
111-112 200
113. 375
114. 325
115-131 200

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Star Spangled War Stories DC, 1952
132 (1). 750
133 (2). 550
3. 475
4-6 285
7-10 220
11-20 185
21-30 130
31-40 90
41-50 70
51-70 60
71-83 55
84. 125
➥1st Mlle. Marie
85-87 80
88-89 65
90. 325
➥1st Dinosaur Island
91. 45
92. 110
93. 45
94-99 110
100. 145
101-133 60
134. 65
135-138 60
139. 50
140-143 24
144. 27
145. 35
146-150 20
151. 125
➥1st Unknown Soldier
152-153 20
154. 55
➥Unk. Soldier origin
155. 16
156-161 14
162-180 6
181-204 5

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Star Trek GOLD KEY, 1967
1. 350
2. 125
3. 100
4. 90
5-6 75
7. 60
8-9 50
10. 40
11-20 30
20/Whitman. . . . 45
21-23 30
23/Whitman. . . . 45
24-26 25
24-26/Whitman . 35
27. 20
27/Whitman. . . . 30
28-29 20
29/Whitman. . . . 30
30-36 20
31-36/Whitman . 30
37-40 20
38-41/Whitman . 30
41. 25
42-48 15
44-48/Whitman . 25
49-59 15
51-59/Whitman . 25
60. 12
60/Whitman. . . . 20
61. 12

Star Trek MARVEL, 1980
1. 5
2. 3
3-18 2

Star Wars MARVEL, 1977
1. 20
1/35¢ 800
1/2nd 4
2. 10
2/35¢ 150
3. 8
3/35¢ 150
4. 7
4/35¢ 150
5-19 7
20-21 6
22-23 5
24-48 4
49. 5
50-106 4
107. 25
➥Low distribution
Ann 1 8
Ann 2-3 5

Strange Adventures DC, 1950
1. 2500
2. 1150
3. 850
4. 800
5-6 650
7. 625
8. 550
9. 1250
➥1st Captain Comet
10. 400
11. 500
12. 400
13. 500
14. 650
15. 500
16. 450
17. 275
18-20 450
21-23 350
24. 375
25. 350
26-29 300
30. 425
31-38 275
39. 400
40-41 250
42. 275
43. 250

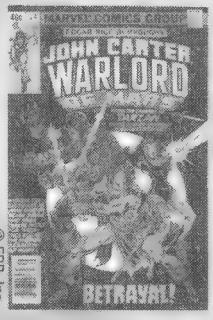
PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

	Human Torch		Ms. Marvel		Iron Fist		Daughters of Dragon		Captain Britain	Captain Britain
	61/35¢ SEP 77	62 OCT 77	62/Whit OCT 77	62/35¢ OCT 77	63 NOV 77	63/Whit NOV 77	64 DEC 77	64/Whit DEC 77	65 JAN 78	66 FEB 78
NM Price	$15	$4	$4	$15	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$7

John Carter #24

★★1/2



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Marvel
May 1979 • 17 pp.
Writer: Chris Claremont
Pencils: Mike Vosburg
Inks: Ric Villamonte
Cover: George Pérez, Terry Austin

"Master Assassin of Mars, Part 9: Betrayal"

Tars Tarkas helps John Carter and Dejah Thoris escape death. She flees to Helium only to be imprisoned by a traitor.

If any heroine in comics could yell, "Enough already," Dejah Thoris could. But her resolve and character shine through in the tough spots in any issue of *John Carter, Warlord of Mars*.

Come on, guys, let's finish this up! A fan can only take so much.

This was supposed to be the final issue of the series, but there were more to come.

Best CGC copy **9.4**

Then 40¢ NOW $3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
44	325
45-46	250
47	200
48	250
49	200
50	225
51	200
52-53	225
54	150
55	200
56-60	150
61-70	125
71-74	100
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76-78	100
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84	125
85-90	100
91	90
92-93	80
94	75
95	90
96	65
97	90
98	75
99	90
100	125
101	65
102-103	90
104-106	65
107	75
108-109	65
110	75
111	65
112	60
113	90
114	125
➥1st Star Hawkins	
115-116	60
117	550
➥1st Atomic Knights	
118	75
119	90
120	200
➥2nd Atomic Knights	
121-123	75
124	90
125-126	75
127	50
128	75
129	90
130-131	50
132	75
133-135	65
136-137	50
138	55
139-140	50
141	55
142-145	50
146	40
147-148	50
149	40
150-160	50
161-167	35
168	30
169	35
170	50
171-172	30
173	40
174	30
175	40
176-177	30
178	25
179	30
180	150
➥1st Animal Man	
181	25
182-183	30
184	60
➥Animal Man app.	
185-186	25
187	20
188	25
189	30
190	100
➥Animal Man app.	
191	20
192-193	25
194	20
195	35
➥Animal Man app.	
196-197	25
198	20
199	30
200	25
201	40
202-204	20
205	125
➥Deadman begins	
206	60
207	50
208-212	60
213	40
214	60
215	45
216	40
217-219	20
220	25
221-223	20
224-230	15
231-244	10

Strange Tales
MARVEL, 1951

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	2750
2	800
3-5	700
6-10	550
11-20	350
21-30	275
31-44	225
45-58	200
59	225
60	200
61	225
62-63	175
64	200
65-66	175
67-78	200
79	250
80	200
81-83	175
84	200
85-88	175
89	400
➥Kirby Fin Fang Foom	
90-92	175
93-96	150
97	350
➥Aunt May & Uncle Ben	
98-100	150
101	900
➥Human Torch starts	
102	425
➥Human Torch app.	
103-105	300
106	225
107	250
108-109	225
110	1250
➥1st Dr Strange	
111	350
112-113	150
114	350
115	450
➥Dr. Strange origin	
116	125
117-118	100
119-123	125
124-125	75
126	90
127-129	75
130	90
131-134	75
135	125
➥1st S.H.I.E.L.D.	
136	75
137-147	50
148	75
➥Ancient One origin	
149-150	50
151	75
152-158	50
159	60
160-168	50
169	15
➥Series restarted	
170	10
171-177	7
178	15
➥Warlock origin	
179-181	10
182-185	3
185/30¢	20
186	3
186/30¢	20
187-188	3
Ann 1	325
Ann 2	350

Stuntman Comics
HARVEY, 1946

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	685
2-3	425

Sub-Mariner
TIMELY, 1941

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	25000
2	7000
3	5000
4	4500
5	3500
6-11	2500
12-15	1500
16-20	1200
21-31	1000
32	1250
33-35	900
36-41	700
42	1000

Sub-Mariner
MARVEL, 1968

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	125
2	45
3-4	35
5	30
6-7	25
8	75
➥vs. The Thing	
9	30
10	25
11-13	20
14	50
➥Toro dies	
15-30	20
31-33	15
34	70
➥Hulk, Surfer app.	
35	35
➥Hulk, Surfer app	
36-40	15
41-72	10
Special 1-2	15

Sugar & Spike
DC, 1956

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	1700
2	700
3-5	500
6-10	350
11-20	250
21-30	150
31-40	125
41-50	75
51-60	55
61-80	50
81-98	35

Suicide Squad
DC, 1987

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1-22	1
23	15
➥1st Oracle	
24-49	1
50	2
51-66	1
Ann 1	2

Sun Girl
MARVEL, 1948

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	1000
2-3	675

Superboy
DC, 1949

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	7000
2	2000
3	1500
4-5	1000
6-10	800
11-15	600
16-20	450
21-30	350
31-38	275
39-50	225
51-60	175
61-67	125
68	500
➥1st Bizarro	
69-77	100
78	175
➥Mxyzptlk origin	
79	100
80	150
➥Meets Supergirl	
81-85	90
86	200
➥Legion app.	
87-88	90
89	275
➥1st Mon-El	
90-93	90
94-97	75
98	100
99	75
100	175
➥Phtm. Zone villains	
101-120	60
121-128	50
129	75
130-137	40
138	55
➥Giant-sized	
139-140	40
141-146	35
147	50
➥Saturn Girl origin	
148-155	25
156	65
➥Giant-size	
157-164	25
165	50
➥Giant-size	
166-168	25
169-173	20
174	30
175-178	20
➥Giant-sized	
179-181	15
182	20
183-196	12
197	20
➥Legion stories start	
198-199	12
200	15
201	12
202	30
203-204	12
205	40
206-207	12
208	15
209	10
210	15
211-212	10
213-221	7
222-230	5
Ann 1	175
SP 1	4

Super Goof
GOLD KEY, 1965

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	24
2-3	12
4-10	10
11-20	7
21-30	5
31-57	3
58-59	4
60	15
61	70
62	15
63	3
64-66	5
67-69	8
70-74	15

Superman
DC, 1939

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	160000
2	16000
3	9200
4	6500
5	6000
6-7	3500
8-10	2850
11-13	2200
14	4500
➥U.S. flag cover	
15	2050
16-20	1650
21	1500
22-23	1100
24	1400
25	1050
26	1250
27-29	950
30	1350
➥1st Mr. Mxyzptlk	
31-40	825
41-50	650
51-52	525
53	1800
➥Superman origin	
54-60	500
61	1000
➥1st Kryptonite	
62-70	475
71-75	450
76	1100
➥Batman team-up	
77-80	400
81-90	375
91-95	360
96-99	325
100	1500
101-110	280
111-120	240
121-130	195
131-139	155
140	175
➥1st Bizarro Jr.	
141-145	115
146	160
➥Superman origin	
147	135
148	115
149	125
➥Legion app	
150-161	68
162-180	58
181-186	55
187	60
188-192	55
193	60
194-198	55
199	180
➥1st race with Flash	
200	60
201	24
202	30
203-211	24
212	50
➥Superbabies-	
213-216	24
217	30
218-221	20
222	30
223-226	20
227	30
228-231	20
232	30
233	40
234-238	18
239	30
240-244	18
245	22
246-251	18
252	60
➥100-page issue	
253	18
254	22
255-264	9
265-271	8
272	20
➥100-page issue	
273-277	7
278	17
➥100-page issue	
279-283	5
284	7
285-286	5
287-292	4
293-299	3
300	11
301-350	3
351-399	2
400	5
401-422	2
423	5
Ann 1	600
Ann 2	325
Ann 3	210
Ann 4	180
Ann 5	105
Ann 6	90
Ann 7	62
Ann 8	46
Ann 9-10	5
Ann 11	4
Ann 12	3
Special 1-3	4

Flashback 1992

15 years ago in CBG...

#951 FEBRUARY 7 1992

DC announced plans for the **Green Lantern Corps**, calling for John Stewart to get an ongoing series while Guy Gardner would get a mini-series, and Gardner and Hal Jordan would duke it out for the title of GL Sector 2814.

#952 FEBRUARY 14 1992

CBG announced it would change format from its newspaper format to a staple-bound 11x14-inch magazine format with #963, the May 1, 1993, issue.

#953 FEBRUARY 21 1992

Plans to adapt the **Alfred Bester** science-fiction classic ***The Stars My Destination*** to comic-book format were announced by **Byron Preiss Visual Products**. The book was adapted into a 192-page graphic novel.

#954 FEBRUARY 28 1992

Kitchen Sink Press said it would begin running a new **Spirit** series reprinting **Will Eisner**'s first Spirit stories from 1940-1942. ***Spirit: The Origin Years*** #1 began reprinting the adventures in chronological order.

— By Ray Sidman
from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

	Tigra	Man-Thing	Havok	Thor	The Falcon	Iron Man	Daredevil	Saturday Night Live	Power Man	Dr. Strange
NM	67 MAR 78	68 APR 78	69 MAY 78	69/Whit MAY 78	70 JUN 78	71 JUL 78	72 AUG 78	72/Whit AUG 78	73 SEP 78	73/Whit SEP 78	74 OCT 78	75 NOV 78	75/Whit NOV 78	76 DEC 78	76/Whit DEC 78
Price	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4

Students of the Unusual #4

This is another comic book with a great title that falls short. *Students of the Unusual* bills itself as a horror anthology, and the best story is probably "Nikook and the Tupilak," based on Inuit folklore. Artist Sergio Cariello has a great-looking story called "Connect the Dots ..." but writer Terry Cronin hits the reader with an ending so cheesy, it should be put on top of a hamburger and served at McDonald's. I like to support anthologies, but *Students* needs to deliver on at least one of these six stories. "The Awakening" only got two pages, and I have no idea what's going on in that one. Scare me or give me irony. "Wake the Dead" is about a guy who digs up dead rock 'n' rollers and puts them in his band. Ultimately, this is part of a longer, continuing story about Recalcitrant Jones trying to revive his dead father. A recap would've helped on this one.

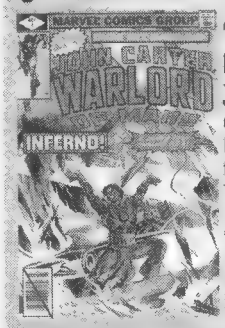
3 BOYS PRODS.
WRITERS:
VARIOUS
ARTISTS:
VARIOUS
COLOR • 24 PGS.
$2.50

While this issue gets a low rating, with a changing lineup of talent, other issues may be better.

★1/2 — Tony DiGerolamo

www.studentsoftheunusual.com

RETROVIEW
John Carter #25 ★★1/2



"Master Assassin of Mars, Part 10: Hide 'n' Seek"

John Carter and Tars Tarkas slowly destroy the ship and escape, while Kantos Kan discovers Dejah Thoris in the dungeons.

Carter and Tars Tarkas battle The Assassin guerilla style on their own turf. I can see Carter climbing and hiding, but Tarkas? Sixteen feet tall and hiding in air ducts? Sort of out there, but this *is* a comic book.

Storywise, you can feel the conclusion coming, with loose ends being tied up everywhere. Dejah Thoris is found, and Surbus reveals his intentions. Carter and Tarkas are racing home. There's one heck of an ending coming!

Marvel
Jul 1979• 17 pp.
Writer: Chris Claremont
Pencils: Mike Vosburg
Inks: Ric Villamonte
Cover: Uncredited

© ERB, Inc.

No CGC copies — Then 40¢ NOW $3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Superman DC, 1987	
0	3
1-2	4
3-5	3
6-8	2
9	4
10-49	2
50	4
51-52	2
53	3
54-72	2
73	3
74	4
75	5
➥Death of Superman	
75/Collector's	12
75/Platinum	40
76-77	3
78	2
78/Collector's	3
79-82	2
82/Variant	4
83-99	2
100	3
100/Variant	4
101-122	2
123	3
123/Variant	5
124-150	2
150/Variant	4
151-170	2
171	4
172-174	2
175	4
176-190	2
190/A	4
191	2
192	3
193-199	2
200	4
201	8
202	2
203	6
➥Lee sketchbook	
204	4
204/Sketch	250
204/DF Lee	30
204/DF Azzarell	25
205/Lee	4
205/Turner	3
205/DF Lee	30
205/DF Turner	25
206-207	3
208	5
209	4
210-215	3
216	5
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
217	7
➥OMAC app.	
218	5
219	6
➥Sacrifice Pt. 1	
219/Variant-226	3
➥1st series #s return	
650	8
651-656	3
1000000	4
1000000/Ltd.	15
Ann 1	4
Ann 2-6	3
Ann 7	4
Ann 8-11	3
Ann 12	4
GS 1-2	5
GS 3	6
Special 1	4
3D 1	5

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Superman/ Batman DC, 2003	
1	8
1/RRP	125
1/2nd-1/3rd	4
2	6
3	5
3/2nd	3
4	4
5	3
6	4
7	3
8	10
➥1st new Supergirl	
8/4th	3
9	5
9/2nd	4
9/3rd	3
10	5
10/2nd	4
11	5
12	4
13	5
13/Supergirl	7
14-18	5
19	4
20	3
21	4
22-24	3
26	4
27-29	3
Superman Family DC, 1974	
164	35
➥100-page issue	
165-169	13
➥100-page issue	
170-177	11
178-180	5
181-200	4
201-222	3
Superman's Girl Friend Lois Lane DC, 1958	
1	2600
2	625
3	415
4-5	300
6-10	220
11-18	125
19	215
20	125
21-29	86
30-50	48
51-67	34
68	44
69	34
70	175
➥1st SA Catwoman	
71	105
➥Catwoman app.	
72-73	15
74	34
75-76	15
77	24
78	15
79-85	10
86	16
87-94	10
95	25
➥Giant-sized	
96-103	8
104	16
105-106	14
107-110	6
111	10
112	6
113	14

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
114-120	6
121	5
122-123	8
124-137	5
Ann 1	75
Ann 2	50
Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen DC, 1954	
1	4000
2	1250
3	675
4-5	475
6-10	335
11-20	235
21-30	150
31-40	100
41-50	75
51-56	50
57-70	30
71	25
72-73	30
74-75	25
76	30
77-88	25
89-90	20
91-94	16
95	25
96-99	16
100	25
101-103	12
104	35
➥Weird Adventures	
105-112	12
113	25
➥Anti-Superman ish	
114-119	12
120-126	10
127	16
128-130	10
131-132	8
133	10
134	25
135-140	12

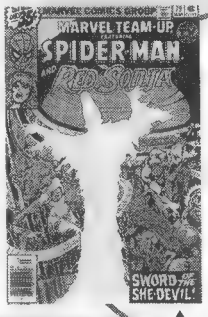
	UNSLABBED Near Mint
141-150	10
151	8
152-163	7
Supernatural Thrillers MARVEL, 1972	
1	27
2-4	10
5	27
➥1st Living Mummy	
6-15	10
Super-Team Family DC, 1975	
1	12
2-4	6
5-10	4
11-15	3
Super-Villain Team-Up MARVEL, 1975	
1	7
2	5
3-5	4
5/30¢	20
6	3
6/30¢	20
7	3
7/30¢	20
8-12	3
12/35¢	15
13	3
13/35¢	15
14	3
14/35¢	15
15-17	3
Swamp Thing DC, 1972	
1	60
2	30

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
3-4	20
5-6	15
7	12
8-10	10
11-24	5
Swamp Thing DC, 1986	
46	4
47-49	3
50	4
51	3
52	4
53	5
➥Batman app.	
54-81	3
82-83	2
84	5
➥Sandman app.	
85-89	2
90	3
91-99	2
100	3
101-124	2
125	3
126-140	2
140/Platinum	6
141-149	2
150	3
151-158	2
159-171	3
Ann 4-5	4
Ann 6	3
Ann 7	4
Tales From the Crypt E.C., 1950	
20	775
21	900
22	700
23-25	520
26-30	400
31	460
32	300

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
33	675
➥Crypt Keeper origin	
34-46	295
Tales of Suspense MARVEL, 1959	
1	1400
2	540
3	475
4	450
5-10	325
11-20	240
21-32	150
33-38	135
39	3500
➥1st Iron Man	
40	1100
41	650
42-45	325
➥1st Crimson Dynamo	
46-47	210
48	265
➥1st red/Gold armor	
49	210
50	155
51	105
52	140
53	120
➥Watcher origin	
54-56	62
57	170
➥Cap America app	
58-59	210
➥Cap stories start	
60	120
61-62	82
63	180
➥Bucky origin	
64	72
65-66	125
➥Red Skull origin	
67-70	52
71-80	42
81-99	32
Tales of the Zombie MARVEL, 1973	
1	25
2	18
3-5	15
6-10	10
Ann 1	15
Tales to Astonish MARVEL, 1959	
1	2000

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM



MARVEL TEAM-UP™

Hyborean Dating Service

Author of one of the more interesting runs on *Team-Up*, Chris Claremont created an unusual crossover in #79, when Red Sonja took control of Mary Jane Watson's body.

The story, featuring the sorceror Kulan Gath, would later provide the springboard for the later *Uncanny X-Men* #190-191.

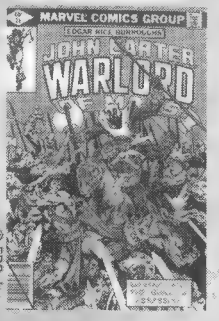
image © Marvel Characters Inc.

	Ms. Marvel		Wonder Man		Red Sonja	Clea, Dr. Strange		Satana		Black Widow	Nick Fury
	77 JAN 79	77/Whit JAN 79	78 FEB 79	78/Whit FEB 79	79 MAR 79	80 APR 79	81 MAY 79	81/Whit MAY 79	82 JUN 79	83 JUL 79
NM Price	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4

RETROVIEW

John Carter #26

★★★



"Master Assassin of Mars, Part 11: Night of the Long Knives"

Dejah Thoris and five others hold The Assassins back until John Carter and Tars Tarkas return to save the city.

How can you properly credit a story that spans 11 issues and still keeps you entertained and glued to the pages?

The city of Helium is saved by six people: Tardos Moor, Dejah Thoris, Sola, Tara, a nurse, and Kantos Kan. As you would expect from a cavalry man, Carter arrives just in time to turn the tide. It's worth picking up and reading, as any *John Carter* issue is.

Ernie Chan does a great job of inking.

Marvel
Aug 1979 • 17 pp.
Writer: Chris Claremont
Pencils: Mike Vosburg
Inks: Ernie Chan
Cover: Chan

Near CGC copy **9.8**

Then 40¢ NOW $3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
2	635
3-5	440
6-10	355
11-20	265
21-26	200
27	3600
➥1st Hank Pym	
28-34	175
35	1900
➥1st Ant-Man	
36	625
37-40	350
41-43	230
44	500
➥1st Wasp	
45-48	150
49	250
➥1st Giant Man	
50-56	95
57	125
➥Spider-Man app.	
58	95
59	150
➥Giant-Man vs. Hulk	
60	175
➥Hulk stories start	
61	75
62	90
➥1st Leader	
63-65	75
66-69	70
70	100
➥Namor stories start	
71-81	55
82	78
83-90	55
91	52
92-93	75
94-99	50
100	75
101	85

Tarzan
DELL, 1948

1	900
2	525
3-5	385
6-9	290
10	260
11	235
12-15	220
16-20	160
21-30	135
31-54	80
55-70	50
71-79	42
80-99	30
100	40
101-110	28
111-120	25
121-131	20

Tarzan
GOLD KEY, 1962

132-154	14
155	18
156-162	10
163-164	8
165	10
166-167	8
168	10
169-170	8
171	10
172-200	7
201-206	6

Tarzan
DC, 1972

207	17
208	10
209-210	6
211-229	4
230-235	8
236-258	3

Tarzan
MARVEL, 1977

1	3
1/35¢	15
2	2
2/35¢	15
3	2
3/35¢	15
4	2
4/35¢	15
5	2
5/35¢	15
6-29	2
Ann 1-3	2

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
MIRAGE, 1984

1	300
1/Counterfeit	2
2	28
2/Counterfeit	2
3-3/Misprint	15
4	12
5	4
6	3
7	5
8	4
9-10	3
11	4
12-15	3
16-62	2

Teen Titans
DC, 1966

1	260
2	100
3-5	40
6-10	32
11-17	28
18-22	33
23-25	18
26-30	12
31	20
➥Giant-sized	
32-38	18
39-43	12
44-47	7
48	12
➥1st Harlequin	
49	7
50	20
➥Batgirl returns	
51-53	6

Thing
CHARLTON, 1952

1	735
2-4	585
5-9	540
10-14	390
15-17	295

Thing
MARVEL, 1983

1	6
2-10	2
11-13	1
14	2
15-36	1

Thor
MARVEL, 1966

126	125
127-140	45
141-160	32
161-164	25
165	40
➥Warlock app.	
166	36
167	24
➥Galactus origin	
168-169	36
➥Galactus origin	
170-177	20
178-179	18
180	24
➥Thor vs. Mephisto	
181	23
182-192	12
193	55
➥Silver Surfer app	
194-199	12
200	16
201-205	9
206-224	7
225	14
➥1st Firelord	
226	7
227-260	5
260/35¢	15
261	5
261/35¢	15
262	5
262/35¢	15
263	5
263/35¢	15
264	5
264/35¢	15
265-299	3
300	8
301-336	2
337	7
➥1st Beta Ray Bill	
338	3
339	5
340	4
341	3
342	4
343-348	2
349	3
350-373	2
374	3
375-400	2
401-410	1
411	3
412	2
413-431	1
432-433	2
434-449	1
450	3
451-473	1
474-475	2
475/Variant	3
476-481	2
482	3
483-499	2
500	3
501-502	2
Ann 2	65
Ann 3	12
Ann 4	10
Ann 5-6	8
Ann 7	7
Ann 8	6
Ann 9-12	4
Ann 13-19	3

Thrilling Comics
BETTER, 1940

1	2000
2	800
3	650
4-10	500
11-18	425
19	500
➥1st Amer. Crusader	
20	425
21-30	350
31-40	310
41	700
➥Hitler cover	
42-52	270
53-70	225
71-80	90

THUNDER Agents
TOWER, 1965

1	140
2	75
3-5	55
6-8	42
9-10	35
11-15	38
16-19	22
20	15

Tomahawk
DC, 1950

1	850
2	400
3-5	290
6-10	195
11-20	125
21-27	100
28	110
29	130
➥Frazetta art	
30	90
31-40	70
41-50	56
51-56	45
57	85
➥Frazetta art	
58-60	40
61-80	32
81-90	25
91-100	15
101-110	10
111-120	8
121-132	6
133-140	5

Tomb of Dracula
MARVEL, 1972

1	100
2-3	35
4	30
5-6	18
7	15
8-9	12
10	100
➥1st Blade	
11	10
12	12
13	35
➥Blade origin	
14	12
15-16	10
17	12
18	10
19	12
20-21	10
22-29	8
30	10
31-32	8
33-41	7
42-43	6
43/30¢	18
44	6
44/30¢	18
45	6
45/30¢	18
46	6
46/30¢	18
47	6
47/30¢	18
48-49	6
50	10
51-57	6
57/35¢	12
58	6
58/35¢	12
59	6
59/35¢	12
60	6
60/35¢	12
61-69	5
70	8

Top-Notch Comics
M.L.J., 1939

1	3500
2	1500
3	1000
4	825
5	900
6-8	650
9	3000
➥1st Black Hood	
10	1000
➥2nd Black Hood	
11-15	625
16-20	550
21-30	425
31-45	250

Transformers
MARVEL, 1984

1	10
2-3	5
4-20	3
21-69	2
70-76	5
77-79	10
80	18

Turok, Son of Stone
DELL, 1956

3	155
4-5	125
6-7	110
7/15¢	135
8-10	110
11-20	75
21-30	48
31-40	38
41-50	28
51-60	22
61-70	15
71-90	10
91-110	8
111-130	6
GS 1	100

Twilight Zone
GOLD KEY, 1962

1	90
2	55
3	42
4-10	35
11-20	30
21-27	16
28-30	10
31-40	8
41-51	6
52-70	5
71-92	4

Two-Fisted Tales
E.C., 1950

18	700
19	500
20	325
21-22	260
23-25	210
26-30	160

Flashback 1987

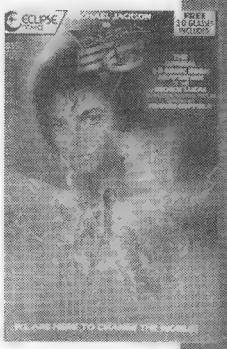
20 years ago in CBG...

#690 FEBRUARY 6 1987

NBM Publishing announced it had contracted its first American creator, artist **Rick Geary**, to create ***A Treasury of Victorian Murder***. Geary, of *Heavy Metal* fame, said the idea for the project stemmed from his collection of newspaper clippings about murders in 19th-century England.

#691 FEBRUARY 13 1987

Comic-book publisher **Eclipse** announced it would adapt the Walt Disney Company's amusement-park attraction/interactive 3-D short film, ***Captain Eo***, to comic-book format. The film, starring pop-singer Michael Jackson, was directed by Francis Ford Coppola and produced by George Lucas.



#692 FEBRUARY 20 1987

Blackthorne Publishing announced the creation of its Blackthorne Paperbacks division. The first planned batch of titles from the company included **Harlan Ellison**'s ***Gentleman Junkie*** and **Bruce Jones**' ***Twisted Tales*** and ***Eye Contact***. Although the Jones projects were released, not all of Blackthorne Publishing's announced paperbacks projects were published.

#693 FEBRUARY 27 1997

Marvel's youth super-team, **Power Pack**, took a look at drug abuse in *Power Pack* #30, in which Alex Power must deal with the consequences of using crack. The issue, "Crack-Up," was written by **Louise Simonson** and drawn by **Val Mayerik** and **Hilary Barta**.

— By Ray Sidman
from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

Shang-Chi	Fury, Shang-Chi, Black Widow	Guardians of Galaxy	Black Panther	Invisible Girl	Night-crawler	The Beast	Ghost Rider	Hawkeye	Werewolf	Shroud	Mocking-bird	Howard the Duck	Hulk, Spider-Woman	Black Widow	Machine Man
84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
AUG 79	SEP 79	OCT 79	NOV 79	DEC 79	JAN 80	FEB 80	MAR 80	APR 80	MAY 80	JUN 80	JUL 80	AUG 80	SEP 80	OCT 80	NOV 80
NM $4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3

Vault of Terror

Vault of Terror is a horror anthology comic book edited by Mike Gagnon.

The stories include titles like "The Pact," about a kid accidentally summoning a demon through his TV, and "The Last Man," about a man who may be the only hold-out against an alien invasion. "That Damn Comic" is about a kid discovering that he has evil, magic powers — and it has probably the best art. The art covers a wide variety of styles: stuff ranging from old Image style to computer-generated stuff.

OPEN BOOK PRESS
WRITERS:
VARIOUS
ARTISTS:
VARIOUS
Color • 48 Pgs.
$27.95

Even a proponent of comic-book anthologies may find it hard to justify the price; there was no reason to put this in a hardcover.

As a 48-page comic book, at a price of about $3.95, it would've received at least another half star. The stories are fairly well executed but they don't break new ground.

For less than $20, you could probably get the whole first season of *Tales from the Crypt* on DVD.

★★ **— Tony DiGerolamo**

www.openbookpress.com

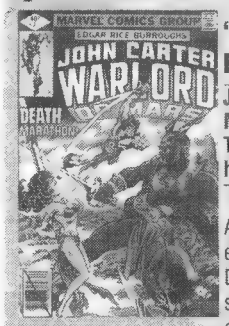
	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Two-Fisted Tales CONTINUED	
31-35	130
36-41	115
Ann 1	550
Ann 2	400
Ultimates MARVEL, 2002	
1	7
2	9
3	6
4	10
5	8
6	7
7	6
8	5
9	6
10	4
11	3
12	2
13	4
Ultimates 2 MARVEL, 2005	
1	5
1/2nd	3
1/Sketch	35
2-11	3
12	4
Ann 1-2	4
Ultimate Spider-Man MARVEL, 2000	
1/2	8
1/2/A	18
1	65
1/White	375
1/DF	175
1/Kay-Bee	4
1/FCBD	3
1/Checkers	7
1/Payless	6
1/Target	175
3	16
4	8
5	55
6	9
6/Niagara	35
7	9
8	8
8/Payless-10	6
11	5
12	4
13	5
14	4
15	5
16-21	3
22	4
23-26	3
27	4
28	3
29	4
30	3
31	4
32	3
33	4
34-46	3
47	4
48-49	3
50	4
53	3
60	8
61	5
62	8
63 ➥Gwen Stacy returns	5
64	4
65	5
66	2
67	3
68-71	2
72	4
73-77	2
78-99	3
100	5
Ann 1-2	3
SP 1	4
Ultimate X-Men MARVEL, 2000	
1/2	5
1	14
1/Sketch	20
1/DF	40
1/Checkers	30
1/NYPost	8
1/Universal	60
2	7
3	6
4-5	5
6-10	4
11-12	3
13	4
14	3
15	4
16-17	3
18	5
19	4
20-26	3
27-32	2
33	5
34	4
40	2
41	5
42	4
43-49	2
50	5
50/Conv	15
51-59	2
60-61	3
61/Coipel	5
62-74	3
Ann 1-2	4
Uncanny X-Men MARVEL, 1970	
-1	2
142 ➥Future Past	25
143	8
144	6
145	7
146-148	6
149-157	5
158 ➥Rogue app.	6
159-161	5
162	6
163-166	5
167 ➥Rogue joins team	4
168-175	5
176-177	4
178	5
179	4
180	3
181	4
182-183	5
184-186	4
187-188	3
189-190	4
191	5
192	4
193	5
194-199	3
200	6
201 ➥Portacio art	5
202-209	4
210-211 ➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth	5
212-213 ➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth	8
214-215	3
216	4
217-218	3
219-220	4
221 ➥1st Mr. Sinister	7
222 ➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth	5
223	4
224-231	3
232	4
233-243	3
244 ➥1st Jubilee	5
245-247	3
248 ➥1st Jim Lee X-Men	5
249-258	3
259	4
260-265	3
266 ➥1st Gambit	14
267-268	6
269	3
270	4
271-280	3
281	2
282	3
283	5
284	4
285	3
286	2
287	3
288-291	2
292	3
293	2
294/Collector's	3
295/Collector's	2
296/Collector's	3
297-299	2
300	3
301-302	2
303	3
304-306	2
307	5
308-328	2
329	4
330-352	2
353	3
354-362	2
363	4
364	3
365-378	2
379	3
380-381	2
381/DF	7
382-386	2
387	3
388-403	2
404	4
405-415	2
416	3
417-429	2
430-438	3
439	2
440-441	3
442	2
443	3
444	4
445-449	2
450 ➥1st X-23	7
451 ➥X-23 app.	6
452	3
453-454	2
455	4
456-461	2
461/Kubert ➥House of M	15
462-478	3
Ann 1	50
Ann 2	45
Ann 3	14
Ann 4	6
Ann 5	5
Ann 6	7
Ann 7	5
Ann 8	4
Ann 9	10
Ann 10	8
Ann 11-12	4
Ann 13	3
Ann 14	6
Ann 15	4
Ann 16	2
Ann 17-18	3
Ann '95-'98	3
Ann '00-'01	4
Uncle Sam DC, 1997	
1-2	5
Uncle Sam Quarterly QUALITY, 1941	
1	1500
2	750
3	600
4	550
5-8	500
Uncle Scrooge DELL, 1953	
4	310
5	220
6-7	185
8	140
9-10	125
11-15	100
16-20	80
21-30	65
31-40	55
41-50	45
51-70	40
71	38
72-100	32
101-120	20
121-140	18
141-160	12
161-171	10
172-176	15
177-178	25
179	225
180	35
181-185	15
186-197	10
198	15
199-200	10
201-219	6
220-240	5
241-260	4
261-299	3
300-308	2
309-318	7
Uncle Scrooge GEMSTONE, 2003	
319-349	7
Unknown Soldier DC, 1977	
205-210	5
211-229	4
230-247	3
248-249	5
250-267	3
268	5
USA Comics TIMELY, 1941	
1	12000
2	4400
3	3100
4-5	2500
6	3550
7	3400
8-10	2250
11-12	1500
13-17	1250
Vampirella WARREN, 1969	
1	325
2	125
3	200
4-5	75
6-9	70
10	30
11-15	43
16-25	30
26	20
27	30
28-36	25

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

RETROVIEW

John Carter #27 ★★★½



Marvel
Sep 1979 • 17 pp.
Writer: Chris Claremont
Pencils: Mike Vosburg
Inks: "M. Hands"
Cover: Bob Budiansky & Sinnott

"Master Assassin of Mars, Part 12: Marathon of Death"

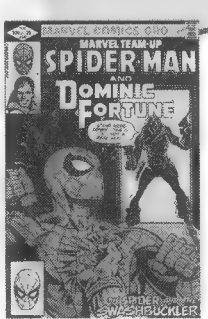
John Carter pursues chief assassin Mordin and watches him die. Dejah Thoris is rescued from death at the hands of the Warhoons.

We have followed the "Master Assassin" tale for 12 issues, and this ending is awesome! Carter rescues Dejah Thoris, and the only way a tale started with a love declaration could end would be the same way.

The inking by "M. Hands" at times is uneven, understandable since "M" is for "Many," but the story is far too strong to be detracted from: a classic, no matter how you look at the different art teams and publishing glitches.

© ERB, Inc.

Just CGC Copy: **9.4** **Then 10¢ NOW $3**



▲ #120

MARVEL TEAM-UP™

AARP calling

In the three-way editorial split of Spidey's supporting cast in the early '80s, *Amazing* got the Daily Bugle staff, *Spectacular* got Empire State, and *Team-Up*'s J.M. DeMatteis was left with Aunt May and the old folks home. Undaunted, he did several stories about senior citizens, including #119 with Gargoyle and #120 with Dominic Fortune.

image © Marvel Characters Inc.

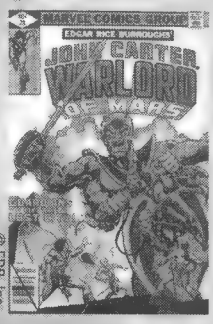
	FF, Black Panther	Night-hawk	Doc Samson	Ant-Man	Hulk, Ka-Zar	Hulk, Power Man, Iron Fist	Captain America	She-Hulk	Paladin	Dazzler
	100 DEC 80	101 JAN 81	102 FEB 81	103 MAR 81	104 APR 81	105 MAY 81	106 JUN 81	107 JUL 81	108 AUG 81	109 SEP 81
NM Price	$6	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3

THE BOTTOM LINE

RETROVIEW

John Carter #28

★★★½



© ERB, Inc.

Marvel
Oct 1979 • 17 pp.
Writer: Peter Gillis
Pencils: Larry Hama
Inks: Ricardo Villamonte
Cover: Carmine Infantino

"The Weapons Makers of Mars"

John Carter, Kantos Kan, and Sa-soom Thil explore the city of Aaan-thor and discover an ancient man guarding a secret.

Peter Gillis has written one heck of a story. From a battle with imaginary enemies to a confrontation with an ancient weapons maker, Carter bids adieu in a fitting fashion.

The last page opens with an armor-clad woman telling the history of ancient Barsoom.

With that, we close the pages of *John Carter*. Who knows what tales of John Carter are yet to be spun? Perhaps there is life yet on the Mars of Edgar Rice Burroughs!

Two-Wendy

$3

Most CGC copy: **9.8**

Then 40c NOW $3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
37-45	20
46	25
47-50	20
51-70	17
71-99	16
100	30
101-111	16
112	45
113	195
Ann 1	175
Special 1	30

Vault of Horror
E.C., 1950

12	4000
13	800
14	725
15	600
16	500
17-19	360
20-25	275
26-30	225
31-40	185

Villains United
DC, 2005

1	12
1/2nd	8
1/3rd	3
2	5
3-5	3
6	4

Wacky Races
GOLD KEY, 1969

1	40
2	26
3-7	20

Walking Dead
IMAGE, 2003

1	35
2	32
3	15
4	12
4/A	6
5	4
6-31	3

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories
DELL, 1940

1	20000
2	7500
3	3400
4	2050
5	1250
6-7	1100
8-9	900
10	850
11-15	750
16-17	650
18	625
19-30	580
31	3700
➥Barks Donald starts	
32	2000
33	1200
34	950
35-36	840
37	435
38	650
39-40	580
41-46	500
47-50	475
51-60	375
61-70	305
71-80	240
81-87	215
88	270
89-90	210
91-97	190
98	365
➥Unc. Scrooge starts	
99	190
100	200
101-112	155
113-116	90
117	130
118-123	85
124	130
125	190
126-129	130
130-133	125
134	200
135-139	105
140	225
➥1st Barks Gyro	
141-150	94
151-170	88
171-200	80
201-240	75
241-260	60
261-283	50
284-285	25
286	28
287	25
288-289	28
290	25
291-293	28
294-296	25
297-308	28
309-311	25
312	28
313-334	14
335	25
336-341	14
342-351	25
351/Poster	30
351/No poster	20
352	25
352/Poster	30
352/No poster	20
353	25
353/Poster	30
353/No poster	20
354	25
354/Poster	30
354/No poster	20
355	25
355/Poster	30
355/No poster	20
356	25
356/Poster	30
356/No poster	20
357	25
357/Poster	30
357/No poster	20
358	25
358/Poster	30
358/No poster	20
359	25
359/Poster	30
359/No poster	20
360	25
360/Poster	30
360/No poster	20
361-400	25
401-429	14
430	10
431-432	12
433	10
434-436	12
437-438	10
439-440	12
441-443	10
444-445	6
446-465	10
466	6
467-478	10
479	30
480	125
481-484	30
485-510	10
511	15
512-513	12
514-516	8
517-518	5
519	14
520-549	10
550	6
551-554	4
555-556	3
557-573	4
574-577	5
578-579	3
580	5
581-584	3
585	5
586-597	3
598-599	4
600-611	6
612-648	7

Walt Disney's Comics & Stories
GEMSTONE, 2003

634-661	7

Wanted
IMAGE, 2003

1	12
1/A	9
1/B	8
1/C	3
1/D	6
1/E	5
2	3
2/B	4
2/C	5
3	3
3/A	4
4-6	3

War
CHARLTON, 1975

1	8
2-10	5
11-22	3
23-49	2

War Is Hell
MARVEL, 1973

1	25
2	18
3-5	14
6-8	10
9-15	8

Warlock
MARVEL, 1972

1	32
2-3	15
4-5	8
6-8	7
9-11	10
12	8
12/30¢	15
13	8
13/30¢	15
14	8
14/30¢	15
15	8

Watchmen
DC, 1986

1	8
2-3	5
4-12	4

Web of Horror
MAJOR MAGAZINES, 1969

1	90
2	55
3	65
➥1st Wrightson cvr	

Web of Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1985

1	8
2	6
3	5
4-10	4
11-28	3
29	5
30	4
31-32	5
33-35	3
36	4
37	3
38	5
39-47	3
48	8
49	2
50	3
51-57	2
58	3
59	8
60-61	3
62-89	2
90	5
91-99	2
100	4
101-105	2
106/Collector's	5
106	1
107-113	2
113/Collector's	4
114-116	2
117	3
117/Variant	5
118	3
119	2
119/Collector's	6
120	4
121-124	2
125	3
125/Variant	4
126-129	2
129/Collector's	5
Ann 1	7
Ann 2	6
Ann 3-10	3
SS 1	4

Weird Fantasy
E.C., 1950

1	1150
2	500
3-4	425
5	335
6-10	240
11-13	180
14	300
15	200
16-19	170
20	200
21	285
22	140

Weird Mystery Tales
DC, 1972

1	30
2	20
3	15
4-10	12
11-20	10
21	15
22-24	10

Weird Science
E.C., 1950

1	1450
2	625
3-4	575
5-10	360
11-14	230
15-18	260
19-22	335

Weird Science-Fantasy
E.C., 1954

23-24	235
25	270
26	220
27	235
28	260
29	450

Weird Suspense
ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975

1	12
2	8
3	7

Weird Terror
COMIC MEDIA, 1952

1	500
2-4	300
5	230
6	260
7	230
8	260
9-10	200
11	260
12	190
13	200

Weird War Tales
DC, 1971

1	125
2	75
3	45
4-5	30
6-10	20
11-20	12
21-31	8
32-50	6
51-92	5
93	6
94-101	5
102-124	4

Weird Western Tales
DC, 1972

12	45
13	30
14-15	20
16-28	12
29	16
30-42	8
43-50	6
51-70	5

Weird Wonder Tales
MARVEL, 1973

1	14
2-3	7
4-7	5
8-15	4
15/30¢	20
16	4
16/30¢	20
17	4
17/30¢	20
18-22	4

Weird Worlds
DC, 1972

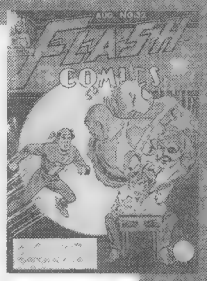
1	12
2-5	7
6	8
7	6
8-10	5

Wendy, the Good Little Witch
HARVEY, 1960

1	60
2	40
3-5	28
6-10	22
11-15	14
16-20	12
21-25	8
26-30	6
31-40	5
41-50	4
51-60	3
61-93	2
94-97	1

Other Flashbacks

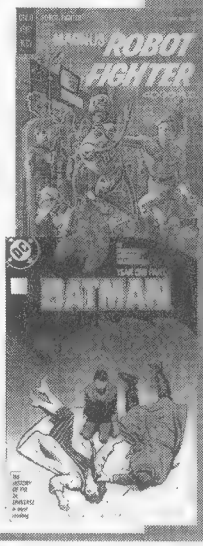
On this date...



FEB 1936 — **Dick Tracy** first appeared in comics in ***Popular Comics*** #1, the same issue that featured the comic-book debuts of **Little Orphan Annie** and **Terry & The Pirates**.

FEB 1948 — DC's super-heroine **Black Canary** appeared in her first solo story in ***Flash Comics*** #92.

FEB 1959 — ***Batman*** #121 included the debut of super-villain **Mr. Freeze**.



FEB 1963 — **Magnus, Robot Fighter** first appeared in the debut issue of his self-titled series.

FEB 1971 — Marvel's super-team **The Defenders** first appeared in ***Sub-Mariner*** #34.

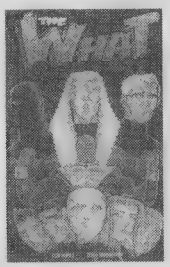
FEB 1987 — The modern-day **Catwoman, Selina Kyle**, first appeared in ***Batman*** #404.

— By Ray Sidman from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

	Iron Man	Devil-Slayer	TeKing Kull	Quasar	The Falcon	Thor	Valkyrie	Wolverine	Professor X	Gargoyle	Dominic Fortune	Human Torch	Man-Thing	Daredevil	The Beast
NM	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124
	OCT 81	NOV 81	DEC 81	JAN 82	FEB 82	MAR 82	APR 82	MAY 82	JUN 82	JUL 82	AUG 82	SEP 82	OCT 82	NOV 82	DEC 82
Price	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3

The What

It's some kind of super-hero book and the "What" is the nameless super-hero in the comic. He has strange powers so the bad guys go, "What are you?" I guess that's where the name comes from. There's a subplot with small children, but their role in this story isn't clear. I think the kids merge and become the super-hero. There are an awful lot of characters here for such a little comic. The creators might consider scaling back and focusing on fewer people. Terry Huddleston's art was fairly crisp and clean. This comic could've really used a synopsis.



IMAGINARY CONCEPTS
WRITER:
ALAN SCHELL
ARTIST:
TERRY HUDDLESTON
Color • 16 Pgs.
FREE

I have to admit, this is one of the nicest mini-comics I've ever seen. That's all the more reason that there should be some kind of price on the cover of the comic book. It's worth at least a buck. If they can't do that, at the very least there should be some sort of website to explain what this is and if there will be more issues. Of course, without it, I'm left to say, "What is this?" Maybe that's the whole point.

★★ — **Tony DiGerolamo**

imaginaryconcepts@comcast.net

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Werewolf By Night
MARVEL, 1972
1 80
2 30
3 15
4 18
5-10 15
11-14 12
15 15
16-17 12
18-20 10
21-31 8
32 60
➥1st Moon Knight
33 30
34 8
35-36 5
37 10
38 5
38/30¢ 15
39 5
39/30¢ 15
40-41 5
42 12
43 18

What If...?
MARVEL, 1977
1 15
2 10
3-5 8
6-10 5
11-12 4
13 5
14-15 4
16 3
17 4
18-26 3
27 5
28 8
29 3
30-31 8
32-34 3
35 5
36-45 3
46 4
47 3
Special 1 4

What If...?
MARVEL, 1989
-1 2
1 4
2-20 3
21-23 2
24 4
25 3
26-49 2
50 3
51-104 2
105 12
106-113 2
114 3

Wheelie and the Chopper Bunch
CHARLTON, 1975
1 20
➥Incl. Byrne art
2 12
3-7 10

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Where Creatures Roam
MARVEL, 1970
1 25
2-8 10

Where Monsters Dwell
MARVEL, 1970
1 32
2-5 10
6-11 8
12 10
13-31 8
32-38 7

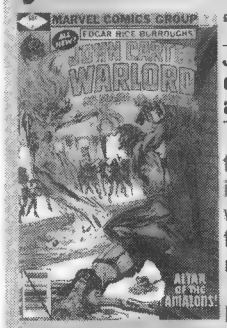
Whiz Comics
FAWCETT, 1940
1 70000
➥1st Captain Marvel
2 5200
3 3400
4 2800
5 2250
6 1650
7 1725
8-9 1650
10 1250
11-12 1100
13-14 1075
15 1250
16-18 1100
19-20 750
21 800
22-24 600
25 6200
➥1st Capt. Marvel Jr.
26 550
27-30 525
31-32 460
33 525
34 365
35 410
36-40 365
41-43 260
44 300
45-50 260
51-60 210
61-70 175
71-82 150
83-100 130
101-120 110
121-152 100
153-155 200

WildC.A.T.s
IMAGE, 1992
0 3
1 4
1/3D 5
1/Gold 10
1/Variant 5
2 4
3-10 3
11 15
11/Holofoil 22
12 8
13 6
14-24 3
25 5
26-49 3
50 4
50/Variant 5
Ann 1 3
Special 1 4

Wild Frontier
CHARLTON, 1955
1 60
2-6 40
7 50

RETROVIEW

John Carter Ann. #3 ★★★



Marvel
1979 • 34 pp.
Writer: Marv Wolfman, Alan Weiss, Chris Claremont
Pencils: Weiss
Inks: Tony DeZuniga
Cover: Weiss

"Amazons of Mars"

John Carter defends a helpless women and finds himself trapped by Klys and her companions. He escapes.

Carter defends a lone woman from an unknown enemy and is drawn into an "Amazon" paradise. If that wasn't enough to satisfy ERB readers, then the story of their bondage and release is.

Their work of Alan Weiss and Tony DeZuniga alone is worth the price of this book. From the cover to the intricately drawn battle and "pleasure" scenes, it is a joy to behold.

If *Carter* were to survive, the Alan Weiss and Tony DeZuniga team would be awesome for another 12-chapter Martian novel or two.

© ERB, Inc.

Buy a CGC copy: **9.8** **Then 60¢ NOW $2**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Witchblade
IMAGE, 1995
1/2 15
1 25
1/B 15
2 18
2/A 15
3 10
4-5 8
6-7 6
8-10 5
10/DF 20
11-14 4
14/Gold 6
15 4
16-18/A 3
19-25 3
25/A 4
25/B 8
25/C 15
26-49 3
50 5
50/DF 15
51-74 3
75-75/Variant . . . 5
76-80 3
80/Holiday 5
80/Cho-80/Land . 3
80/Conv 5
81-99 3
100 5
101 3
500 5

Witches Tales
HARVEY, 1951
1 310
2 260
3-10 210
11-16 190
17-19 225
20-24 190
25-28 165

Witching Hour
DC, 1969
1 150
2 70
3 50
4-6 25
7 18
8-13 15
14-51 10
52-66 8
67-85 5

Wolverine
MARVEL, 1982
1 25
2 18
3 17
4 16

Wolverine
MARVEL, 1988
-1 2
1/2 3
1/2/Ltd. 8
1 10
2 6
3-5 5
6 4
7-9 5
10 8
11-14 4
15 5
16-19 4
20 5
21-23 4
24-40 3
41 4
42 2
43 3
44 2
45-49 3
50 4
51-56 2
57 3
58-74 2
75 4
76-79 2
80 8
81-84 2
85 3
85/Variant 4
86-87 2
87/Deluxe 4
88 2
88/Deluxe 4
89 2
89/Deluxe 4
90 2
90/Deluxe 4
91-98 2
99 4
100 5
100/Variant 8
101-124 2
125 4
125/A-125/B . 10
126-130 2
131 5
131/A 3
132-133 2
133/Variant 4
134-144 2
145 4
145/Gold foil . . 25
145/DF 50
145/Silver foil . . 30
145/Nabisco . 400
146 5
147-149 2
150 3
150/DF 14
151-165 2
166 3
167-189 2
Ann 1995 4
Ann '96-'97 . . . 3
Ann '99-'00 . . . 4
Ann 2001 3
Special 1 4

Wolverine
MARVEL, 2003
1 7
2 5
3 4
4-9 3
10 2
11-15 3
16 2
17 3
18-20 2
20/Variant 90
➥Retailer incentive
20/Texas 20
➥Texas con premium
21-26 2
26/Silvestri 15
26/DF 20
27 2
27/Quesada . . . 25
28-29 2
30-35 3
36 5
36/Quesada . . . 12
37-46 3

Wolverine: The Origin
MARVEL, 2001
1 25
1/DF 50
2 12
2/DF 24
3 8
3/DF 20
4 5
4/DF 20
5 4
5/DF 20
6 5
6/DF 20

Wonder Woman
DC, 1942
1 17000
2 3100
3 1900
4 1200
5 1050
6-10 900
11-20 650
21-23 450
24 600
25 450
26-30 425
31-40 415
41-44 400
45 500
46-50 400
51-60 310
61-70 240
71-79 190
80-90 155
91-100 120
101-104 90
105 600
➥1st Wonder Girl
106-110 80
111-130 70
131-149 56
150-159 50
160-161 30
162 40
163-170 30
171-180 25
181-190 33
191-200 40
201-210 14
211 25
➥100-page issue
212-213 11
214 30
➥100-page issue
215-218 11
219-236 7
237-260 6
261-268 5

▲ #126

MARVEL TEAM-UP™

Too many heroes

While almost all *Marvel Team-Ups* had a single story, #126 had two, with Spider-Man and Hulk starring in one — and Power Man and Son of Satan, of all people, in the other.

In 1985, tiring of the guest-star carousel, Marvel ended *Team-Up* and started a new "third" Spider-title, *Web of Spider-Man.*

Image © Marvel Characters Inc.

	Tigra	(at left)	The Watcher	Captain America	The Vision	Scarlet Witch	Frog Man	Mr. Fantastic	Fantastic Four	Jack of Hearts
	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134
	JAN 83	FEB 83	MAR 83	APR 83	MAY 83	JUN 83	JUL 83	AUG 83	SEP 83	OCT 83
NM Price	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3

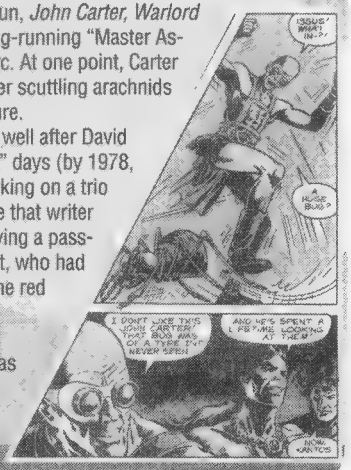
THE BOTTOM LINE

John Carter and The Spiders of Mars?

Near the end of its run, *John Carter, Warlord of Mars* featured the long-running "Master Assassin of Mars" story arc. At one point, Carter and his friends encounter scuttling arachnids in an abandoned structure.

While it was written well after David Bowie's "Ziggy Stardust" days (by 1978, Bowie was in Berlin working on a trio of albums), is it possible that writer Chris Claremont was giving a passing nod to the rock artist, who had already given a nod to the red planet?

At any rate, as Tim Lasiuta has written, it was an excellent series, well worth picking up.



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UNSLABBED Near Mint

X-Men
MARVEL, 1991
-1 . . . 3
-1/A . . . 4
1/Beast . . . 5
1/Colossus . . . 3
1/Cyclops . . . 4
1/Magneto . . . 3
1/Collector's . . . 5
2 . . . 4
3-20 . . . 3
21-24 . . . 2
25 . . . 5
25/Gold . . . 25
25/Museum . . . 30
26-29 . . . 2
30 . . . 3
31-49 . . . 2
50 . . . 3
50/Variant . . . 4
51-54 . . . 2
54/Silver . . . 25
55-62 . . . 2
62/A . . . 3
63-79 . . . 2
80 . . . 3
80/Holofoil . . . 10
80/DF . . . 7
81-98 . . . 2
99-100/G . . . 3
101-104 . . . 2
105 . . . 3
106-113 . . . 2
114 . . . 5
115-144 . . . 2
145-147 . . . 3
148 . . . 2
149 . . . 3
150 . . . 4
151 . . . 3
152 . . . 2
153-157 . . . 3
158 . . . 2
159 . . . 3
160-164 . . . 2
165 . . . 3
166-169 . . . 2
170-Ann 3 . . . 3
Ann 1995 . . . 4
Ann '96-'98 . . . 3
Ann '99-'01 . . . 4
Ashcan 1 . . . 1

Young Allies

Comics
TIMELY, 1941
1 . . . 11500
2 . . . 3000
3 . . . 2100
4 . . . 3000
5 . . . 1300
6-8 . . . 875
9 . . . 900
10 . . . 875
11-14 . . . 720
15-20 . . . 615

Young Men
MARVEL, 1950
4 . . . 120
5-10 . . . 70
11-23 . . . 52
24 . . . 1600
➥Cap. Namor origin
25 . . . 775
26-28 . . . 750

Y: The Last Man
DC, 2002
1 . . . 30
2 . . . 15
3 . . . 5
4-5 . . . 4
6-49 . . . 3

Zero Hour: Crisis in Time
DC, 1994
4-2 . . . 2
1 . . . 3
0 . . . 2
Ashcan 1 . . . 1

Zorro
DELL, 1959
8-9 . . . 70
10-12 . . . 68
13-15 . . . 65

Zorro
GOLD KEY, 1966
1 . . . 70
2-4 . . . 38
5-7 . . . 34
8-9 . . . 28

Zorro
MARVEL, 1990
1 . . . 3
2-12 . . . 2

Got a price guide or collecting question? Visit www.cbgxtra.com and ask it!

UNSLABBED Near Mint

269-279 . . . 4
280 . . . 3
281-283 . . . 5
284-299 . . . 3
300 . . . 6
301-329 . . . 3

Wonder Woman
DC, 1987
0 . . . 6
1 . . . 4
2-10/A . . . 3
11-84 . . . 2
85 . . . 10
➥1st Deodato art
86 . . . 4
87-93 . . . 3
94-99 . . . 2
100 . . . 3
100/Variant . . . 4
101-119 . . . 2
120 . . . 3
121-199 . . . 2
200 . . . 4
201-213 . . . 2
214 . . . 25
➥Inf. Crisis tie
215 . . . 10
216 . . . 7
217 . . . 6
218 . . . 5
219 . . . 15
➥Max Lord dies
219/2nd . . . 3
➥2nd print
220 . . . 12
221-1000000 . . 3
Ann 1-2 . . . 2
Ann 3 . . . 3
Ann 4 . . . 4
Ann 5 . . . 3
Ann 6 . . . 4
Ann 7-8 . . . 3
Special 1 . . . 2

Woody Woodpecker
DELL, 1952
16-20 . . . 14
21-50 . . . 12
51-72 . . . 9
73-75 . . . 25
76-100 . . . 15
101-120 . . . 10
121-130 . . . 6
131-170 . . . 3
171-187 . . . 2
188-189 . . . 10
190-191 . . . 25
193-201 . . . 15

World's Best Comics
DC, 1941
1 . . . 18000

World's Finest Comics
DC, 1941
2 . . . 4000
3 . . . 2900
4-5 . . . 1975
6-7 . . . 1450
8 . . . 1275
9 . . . 1300
10 . . . 1050
11-16 . . . 895
17 . . . 875
18-20 . . . 805
21-30 . . . 610
31-40 . . . 530
41-60 . . . 430
61-64 . . . 320
65 . . . 540
66-70 . . . 370
71 . . . 900
➥1st Sup/Bat team
72-73 . . . 550
74-80 . . . 375
81-90 . . . 235
91-93 . . . 175
94 . . . 525
➥Sup/Bat team origin
95-99 . . . 175
100 . . . 260
101-110 . . . 105
111-121 . . . 85
122-142 . . . 75
143-150 . . . 52
151-152 . . . 50
153-155 . . . 45
156 . . . 55
➥Bizarro, Joker app.
157-161 . . . 45
162-177 . . . 38
178-180 . . . 30
181-190 . . . 25
191-197 . . . 20
➥Sup/Flash race
198-199 . . . 80
➥Sup/Flash race
200-212 . . . 16
213-228 . . . 14
229-270 . . . 6
271-300 . . . 4
301-323 . . . 3

Worlds of Fear
FAWCETT, 1952
2 . . . 325
3 . . . 250
4-9 . . . 200
10 . . . 475

Worlds Unknown
MARVEL, 1973
1 . . . 17
2 . . . 10
3 . . . 7
4-8 . . . 5

Wulf the Barbarian
ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975
1 . . . 12
2 . . . 9
3-4 . . . 8

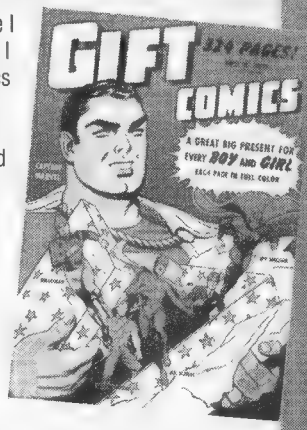
Xenozoic Tales
KITCHEN SINK, 1987
1 . . . 8
2-5 . . . 6
6-10 . . . 5
11-14 . . . 4

X-Men
MARVEL, 1963
1 . . . 7000
➥1st X-Men
2 . . . 1900
3 . . . 1030
4 . . . 900
5 . . . 550
6 . . . 500
7 . . . 475
8-10 . . . 360
11 . . . 300
12 . . . 500
➥1st Juggernaut
13 . . . 275
14 . . . 250
15-16 . . . 190
17-20 . . . 100
21-27 . . . 90
28 . . . 155
➥1st Banshee
29-34 . . . 90
35 . . . 150
➥Spider-Man app.
36-37 . . . 65
38 . . . 80
39-40 . . . 90
41-48 . . . 65
49-51 . . . 75
52 . . . 65
53-57 . . . 72
58 . . . 100
➥1st Havok
59-65 . . . 70
66 . . . 80
➥Last new issue
67-80 . . . 35
81-85 . . . 40
86-93 . . . 35
94 . . . 500
➥2nd New X-Men
95 . . . 85
➥Thunderbird dies
96 . . . 55
97-98 . . . 48
98/30¢ . . . 125
99 . . . 48
99/30¢ . . . 125
100 . . . 60
➥Phoenix orig. starts
100/30¢ . . . 135
101 . . . 55
➥Phoenix origin
102-105 . . . 28
105/35¢ . . . 60
106 . . . 28
106/35¢ . . . 60
107 . . . 28
107/35¢ . . . 60
108 . . . 35
➥1st Byrne X-Men
109 . . . 30
➥1st Weapon alpha
110-115 . . . 20
116-119 . . . 16
➥1st Alpha Flight
120-121 . . . 28
122-128 . . . 12
129 . . . 20
➥1st Kitty, E. Frost
130-135 . . . 12
136 . . . 11
137 . . . 14
➥Phoenix dies
138 . . . 8
139-141 . . . 11
➥Future Past

Tony's Back Page

"The first time I met Jerry"

Jerry Bails was changing my life even before I met him in person. As I said earlier in this issue, I doubt I would have considered a career in comics without having been part of comics fandom as a teenager. When I did meet him, he was every bit as generous, kind, and just plain smart as I could have hoped.



That first time I met Jerry was at a Detroit Triple Fan Fair in the very early 1970s. He had a dealer's table. I bought an issue of *Fantastic*, a weekly comic from England, from him — and also an issue of *Gift Comics* from the 1940s.

Fantastic predated *The Mighty World of Marvel*, a weekly prepared in the Marvel offices in New York for publication in Great Britain. It reprinted early stories of The Fantastic Four and other heroes, though I can't recall if it would reprint an entire story or divide it into chapters, as we did in *MWoM*.

Gift Comics was 300-plus pages of coverless copies of *Whiz Comics*, *Captain Marvel*, and other Fawcett titles bound together behind a festive holiday-themed cover. It originally sold for 50¢ at a time when standard-format comic books still cost but a dime.

Jerry and I chatted about these alternate formats for a spell. He encouraged my fascination with and interest in them. I thought the weekly had possibilities for American publishers and was even more ebullient about that fat issue of *Gift Comics*. Ironically, I would end up working on Marvel's weeklies less than a year later and, in recent years, see a great many of my 1970s Marvel stories reprinted in *Marvel Essential* volumes even thicker than that treasured issue of *Gift Comics*.

Alternate comic-book formats still fascinate me. I buy and enjoy digests, manga, and more, but it was Jerry Bails who first opened my eyes to the possibilities. It's one more of the many debts I — and every comics fan and industry professional — owe him.

— ***Tony Isabella***

	Kitty Pryde	Wonder Man	Aunt May, Franklin	Sandman	Nick Fury	Black Widow	Daredevil	Captain Marvel	Starfox	Moon Knight	Iron Man	Nomad	Human Torch	Thor	Cannonball	X-Men
	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
NM Price	NOV 83 $3	DEC 83 $3	JAN 84 $4	FEB 84 $3	MAR 84 $3	APR 84 $3	MAY 84 $3	JUN 84 $3	JUL 84 $3	AUG 84 $4	SEP 84 $3	OCT 84 $3	NOV 84 $3	DEC 84 $3	JAN 85 $3	FEB 85 $3

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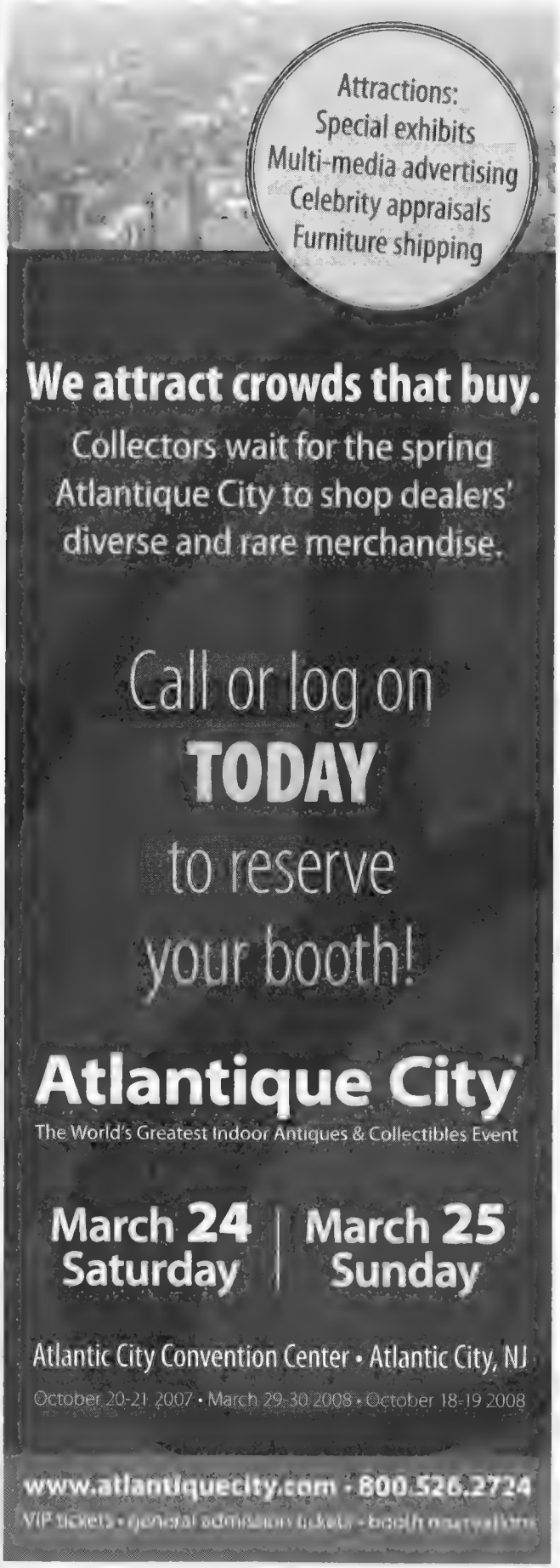
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Mile High celebrates an anniversary

Banking on reinvention

by **CHUCK ROZANSKI**

Without some sort of fundamental change in operating strategy, we had, at most, 90 days left before we became completely insolvent.

I'm having lunch with our company banker today and I have to tell you in all honesty that I am delighted at the prospect! Kerry Mayer has been our banker for more than 10 years, and during that time we've developed a close rapport and respect that can only originate from a decade of working through difficulties and hard times. Today's lunch is intended as a small celebration of the 10-year anniversary of one particularly difficult time in the history of Mile High Comics: the day that we came the closest to going out of business in our entire 37-year history as a company.

To set the stage: During the early 1990s, the comics business went into a state of near total collapse. I've already written about the causes and circumstances of that awful period in comics-publishing history in several of my past columns, so I'm not going to cover that same ground today. Suffice it to say, however, that, when *any* industry suffers a 77% decline in unit sales volume over a four-year period, it is incredibly difficult for even the strongest participants in that market to stay solvent.

In the case of Mile High Comics, we had been fairly conservative going into the early 1990s and had, thus, managed to avoid most of the negative impacts caused by the bursting of the speculative bubble in new comics. When the approximately 8,000 comics retailers who were *not* as fortunate as we were all forced to liquidate their inventories at distress prices during 1992-1996, however, they just about killed our entire back-issue mail-order business.

Since selling back issues by mail was (and still is) the financial mainstay of our company, having that cash flow cut off caused us to sustain horrific losses. By the end of 1996, all of the annual earnings that I had diligently reinvested in the company from 1969 to 1996 were lost in a futile attempt to stem our operating losses. When we finally ran out of cash at the end of November 1996, the management of our bank demanded that I appear before them to explain why they shouldn't immediately liquidate the company.

To make a long story short, on Dec. 7, 1996 I gave a presentation in which I outlined my intention to reinvent Mile High Comics as an Internet retailer. I realize that seems like an obvious decision today, but you have to remember that, in 1996, e-commerce was still an unfulfilled dream. There were a few pioneers, such as Jeff Bezos at Amazon.com, who were just starting to succeed at retailing via the Internet, but for the most part it was still a great deal of pie-in-the-sky.

I need to stress at this point that bankers are generally conservative (they are, after all, entrusted with lending out other people's money) and are, therefore, not at all fond of hearing from a client that he is going to completely change his operating strategy in order to chase the dream of an unproven technological change. On that particular day, however, the circumstances facing Mile High Comics were *so* dire that it was clear to everyone in the room that the status quo was untenable.

Without some sort of fundamental change in operating strategy, we had, at most, 90 days left before we became completely insolvent. That being the case, everyone present welcomed my presentation about the enormous potential benefits that would come about through a conversion to an Internet comics retailership. As a result, while the bank still kept us on a tight leash, I was given a six-month window in which to show progress. When I met our initial goals within 90 days, the future of our company once again became secure.

I am recounting for you this bit of Mile High Comics history, not to impress you with my prescience at having recognized early on the benefits of the Internet to comics retailing (Steve Milo of American Entertainment was actually a couple of years ahead of me in that regard), nor my adroitness at gaining forbearance from our bank.

The issue that I really want to address today is one of relationships. As I said in the

beginning, I am having lunch with Kerry Mayer today. Kerry was the most junior banker who participated in that fateful meeting in 1996, but she was also the one entrusted with the responsibility of working closely with me to make sure that all continued to go well at Mile High Comics.

Over the past 10 years, Kerry and I have worked through many ups and downs, but the key to our relationship is that we have come to implicitly trust each other. I cannot emphasize how important earning the trust of others is in determining one's success or failure in business and in life. I started off in business with a great deal of hubris and ego, believing absolutely that I could overcome any obstacle or difficulty on my own.

If there is one key lesson that I have learned over the past 37 years, however, it is that earning the support and trust of others is the one element that will help you survive all other hardships.

Before I go on, I want you to know that I fully realize that that statement flies somewhat in the face of what you see illustrated on TV and in films, in which the business world is portrayed as a dog-eat-dog environment in which only the most conniving and evil end up winning. To be fair, there's certainly an element of truth to that negative representation, sine more than a few villains do ultimately "win" in business.

But is the pursuit of wealth and power all that life is about?

I think not.

When you tie your own measure of personal achievement and success to your conquering of others by any means, I believe that you will never really find happiness. There will always be someone richer, more powerful, and just a little more aggressive than you are. If, on the other hand, you work diligently to help those who help you, a world of possibilities exists for doing good deeds. And, as corny as it might sound, helping others really does feed one's own soul and spirit. Altruism is anything but, since it can be a clear path to achieving genuine inner peace, which is the most valuable asset that any human being can possess.

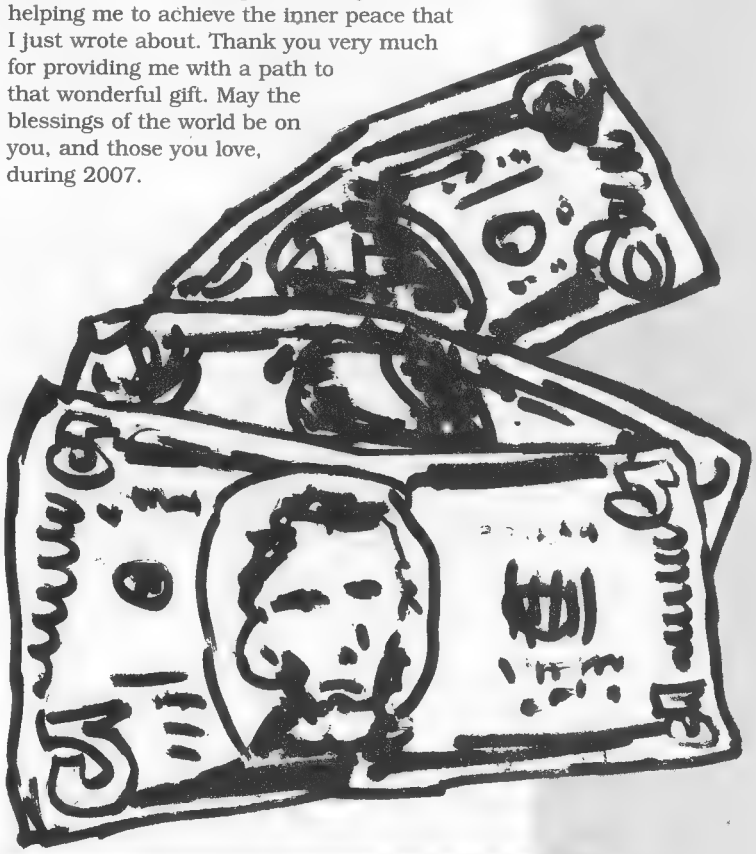
To diverge for a moment: During the month of November, I attended three major comics conventions. At those shows, I met dozens of readers of this column, all of whom provided me with kind feedback. One comment I did hear several times, however, was that they read the column "even though they had no intention of becoming a comics retailer." I found that statement to be the most heartening feedback of all, since, while the points that I try to illustrate in my column have specific applicability to comics retailing, they also are intended as illustrations of my personal philosophy on life.

I think that it is important to say that being truthful and loyal to those with whom one interacts each day is critical to one's own inner peace. This is true regardless of the circumstances. None of us are saints or angels, so there will always be days in which we don't behave as well as one might wish. But, if our underlying intent when beginning each day is to help those around us to achieve their own goals, then the odds of a positive outcome for ourselves are greatly enhanced.

In closing today's column, I wish to pass on to everyone out there my very best wishes. If you are reading this column, the odds are that we've been together for quite a while. I want to thank you very much for taking the time to read this column each month.

After all, without your continuing positive support, I would have no reason to write down my thoughts. That's an exceptionally cogent point, since the effort required to write this column each month forces me to crystallize in my own mind exactly what it is that I think, and believe. In that regard, all of you are helping me to achieve the inner peace that I just wrote about. Thank you very much for providing me with a path to that wonderful gift. May the blessings of the world be on you, and those you love, during 2007.

But is the pursuit of wealth and power all that life is about? I think not.



CHUCK ROZANSKI, owner of Mile High Comics, the world's largest online retail store, has been with CBG since the beginning, his first ad appearing in #8 in 1971. Be sure to write him at *chuck@milehighcomics.com*, and check out his website at *www.milehighcomics.com!*

Florida fans prepare for ...

MegaCon®

by RAY SIDMAN

The annual dose of pop-culture fun known as MegaCon returns for the 2007 show Feb. 16-18, bringing with it lots of celebrity guests from the comics field as well as other industries. Organizer Beth Widera spoke to ***CBG*** about this year's event.

She said that one new feature will be the voice-dubbing seminar. "We get such a huge crowd of anime fans, and a lot of them are really into that genre." This will be followed by a voice-dubbing contest on Sunday, sponsored by Anime Sushi.

The show will also have dozens of professionals from the comics field, including:

- Mike Carey
- George Pérez
- J.G. Jones
- Jimmy Palmiotti
- Darwyn Cooke
- David Finch
- Greg Horn
- Phil Noto
- Barbara Kesel
- Adam Hughes
- Steve McNiven
- Jim Cheung
- Ethan Van Sciver
- Stan Sakai
- Brian Pulido

WHAT, WHERE, and WHEN
What: MegaCon 2007
Where: Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla.
When: Feb. 16-18
Hours: 1-7 p.m. Friday
10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday
Admission: Three-day pass: $45.80 advance, $48 door; one-day pass: $20.24 advance, $22 door
For more information: MegaCon, P.O. Box 1097, Safety Harbor, FL 34695; (727) 796-5725; *info@megaconvention.com*; *www.megaconvention.com*

(From left to right) Mike Carey, Ethan Van Sciver, Steve McNiven, and Stan Sakai are just a few of the comic-book pros appearing at the 2007 MegaCon.

The list of media guests is equally long, with such celebrities as Sean Astin, Mary McDonnell, Margot Kidder, Kevin Sorbo, Lou Ferrigno, June Lockhart, Lloyd Kaufman, and Jamie Bamber.

Among the numerous panels and seminars will be two by DC. Widera said two editors from DC would discuss upcoming projects from the publisher. As for other major publishers, she said they have appeared at the show in the past and she expected participation, but that no others were yet confirmed. However, she was able to confirm that Steve McNiven would take part in a panel about Marvel's *Civil War*.

Other panels include one on storyboarding and indy animation, and another discussing making props and costumes.

Another popular event at the show is the Indy Film Festival. In its third year, it is expected to draw a large crowd, said Widera. She stated that the first year the reception was modest, but last year it was standing room only. *Students of the Unusual* creator Terry Cronin is organizing the fest.

The show has also attracted the attention of the annual Web Cartoonist Awards. The sixth annual ceremony will take place Saturday evening. This marks the first year the ceremony has taken place in conjunction with MegaCon.

On Saturday, MegaCon will hold two costume contests, one for anime and another for those dressed as super-heroes.

For games, there will be trading-card games, live-action role-playing, and role-playing game tournaments going on throughout the weekend.

As for attendance, Widera said she expects above 22,000. "We had that last year, and will have it this year, I'm sure. We've never gone backwards in attendance. We've always climbed upward."

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by RAY SIDMAN

CALIFORNIA

Mar 2-4 CA, San Francisco. Wondercon, Moscone Ctr. S. 747 Howard St. Comic-Con Int'l., PO Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112. PH: 619-491-2475.

Mar 14 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Mar 16-18 CA, Los Angeles. Wizard World, Convention Ctr. 1201 S Figueroa St. Wizard Conventions; PH: 845-268-2000.

Mar 17 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Mar 21 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Mar 24 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Mar 28 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Mar 31 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Apr 4 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Apr 7 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Apr 11 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Apr 14 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Apr 18 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Apr 21 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Apr 25 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Apr 28 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10 am-5pm. T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

FLORIDA

Feb 16-18 FL, Orlando. MegaCon, Orange Cty. Conv. Ctr. SH: Fri. 1pm-7pm, Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 10am-5pm. MegaCon, PO Box 1097, Safety Harbor, FL 34695. PH: 727-796-5725.

Apr 13-15 FL, Fort Lauderdale. Anime Supercon, Inverrary Hotel. A: $12.-$20. for weekend, under 10 free. / . one day, $20. for weekend. Mike, PH: 954-882-2950.

ILLINOIS

Feb 18 IL, Bridgeview. Comic Books, NASCAR, Toys, Sports Cards, Hot Wheels & More Show, Oremus Center. 1 blk. W. of Harlem Ave. at 79th St., SH: 9am-1pm, T: 65-8', F: $35. for 1, $60. for 2, A: $2. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Feb 18 IL, Springfield. Comic Book Convention, Signature Inn. 3090 Stevenson Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

Feb 25 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books, Sports Card & More Show, Civic Center. 147th St., 1 blk. W. La Grange Rd., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 60-6' & 8', F: $35.-$40., A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Mar 4 IL, Champaign-Urbana. Twin Cities ComicCon, Eastland Suites. 1907 N. Cunningham Ave., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

Mar 10 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books, Sports Card & More Show, Civic Center. 147th St., 1 blk. W. La Grange Rd., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 60-6' & 8', F: $35.-$40., A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Mar 25 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books, Sports Card & More Show, Civic Center. 147th St., 1 blk. W. La Grange Rd., SH:

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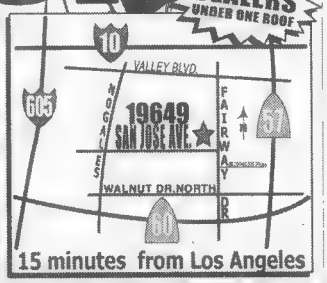

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9am-2pm, T: 60-6' & 8', F: $35.-$40., A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Mar 25 IL, Gurnee. Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn. 6161 W. Grand Ave., SH: 10am-3pm. Jim Libasci, PH: 847-336-9963.

Apr 14 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books, Sports Card & More Show, Civic Center. 147th St., 1 blk. W. La Grange Rd., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 60-6' & 8', F: $35.-$40., A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

IOWA

Feb 23-25 IA, Des Moines. Annual Free Mall Show, Merle Hay Mall. SH: Fri. & Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 40, A: free. Tim Belk, 2811 Joplin St., Joplin, MO 64804. PH: 417-781-4422.

Mar 17 IA, Bettendorf. Comic Book Show. Ramada Inn. 3020 Utica Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

KANSAS

Feb 16-18 KS, Topeka. Annual Free Mall Show, Westridge Mall. SH: Fri.-Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T: 50, A: free. Tim Belk, 2811 Joplin St., Joplin, MO 64804. PH: 417-781-4422.

MASSACHUSETTS

Apr 15 MA, Chelmsford. Comic Book Show, Radisson Hotel. Exit 34 off 495, SH: 10am-3pm, T: 65, A: $5. Larry's Wonderful World, PH: 978-459-5323.

MICHIGAN

Mar 4 MI, Livonia. X-Trava-Con, Knights of Columbus Hall. 19801 Farmington Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: $50., A: $3. Motor City Conventions, Michael Goldman or Gary Bishop. PH: 248-426-8059.

MINNESOTA

Mar 18 MN, Eagan. Comicon, Best Western Dakota Ridge. 3450 Washington Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

MISSOURI

Feb 24 MO, Chesterfield. Comic Book Convention, Hampton Inn & Stes. 5 McBride & Son Ctr. Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

NEW JERSEY

Mar 4 NJ, Wayne. Comic, Toy & Collectible Show, Co. #1 Firehouse. 1 Parish Dr. off Rt. 23 N., Lincoln Park Exit, SH: 8am-3pm, T: 75, A: $2, under 12 free. Phil De Mario, PO Box 4094, Wayne, NJ 07474. PH: 973-726-9897.

Apr 1 NJ, Wayne. Comic, Toy & Collectible Show, Co. #1 Firehouse. 1 Parish Dr. off Rt. 23 N., Lincoln Park Exit, SH: 8am-3pm, T: 75, A: $2, under 12 free. Phil De Mario, PO Box 4094, Wayne, NJ 07474. PH: 973-726-9897.

NEW YORK

Feb 23-25 NY, New York City. Comic-Con, Jacob Javits Ctr. A: $30.-$40. per day, $45.-$65. for weekend. Reed Exhibitions, PH: 888-605-6059.

OHIO

Mar 4 OH, Columbus. Comic Con, Buckeye Hall of Fame Cafe. 1421 Olentangy River Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 40-6', F: $70., A: $3., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

Mar 25 OH, Cleveland. Saturday's Child Nostalgia Conv., Quality Inn & Stes-Richfield. 4742 Brecksville Rd. Rt. 21, T: 57-6', F: $65., A: $3., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper. 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

PENNSYLVANIA

Mar 11 PA, Essington-Philadelphia. Comic Con, Ramada Airport. 76 Industrial Hwy., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 65, A: $3. Derek Woywood, PO Box 313, Clementon, NJ 08021. PH: 856-782-0817.

Mar 24-25 PA, Monroeville. Steel City Con (Comic, Toy, & Childhood Collectible Show), 105 Mall Blvd., SH: Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 10am-4pm, T: 450, A: $7., $5. under 12. Orangestone Promotions, Inc., PH: 814-467-1500.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Feb 24 SC, Columbia. 9th Comic Book, Antique Toy & Collectible Show, Jamil Temple. St. Andrews Rd. at I-26, SH: 10am-4pm. Mark, PH: 803-358-0444 (eves.).

TEXAS

Apr 14 TX, Live Oak-San Antonio. Eckman's Comic, Sports Card & Toy Show, Civic Center. Pat Booker Rd., IH-35 & Loop 1604, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 155, A: $3., 12 & under free. Dale Eckman. 8050 Pioneer Oak, Converse, TX 78109. PH: 210-945-0003.

WISCONSIN

Apr 1 WI, West Allis. Comic Book Show, Burnham Bowl. 6016 W. Burnham Ave., SH: 11am-4pm, A: $2. Henry, PH: 414-476-5596 or Clayton, PH: 414-328-3675.

INTERNATIONAL

Apr 13-15 AUSTRALIA, Brisbane. Supanova Pop Culture Expo, RNA Showgrounds. Daniel Zachariou. info@supanova.com.au

Apr 14-15 NEW ZEALAND, Christchurch. Armageddon Pulp Culture Expo, Convention Centre. SH: 9am-6pm, A: $15. per day, $10. 12 & under. PH: 09-625-8054. info@pulpexpo.com

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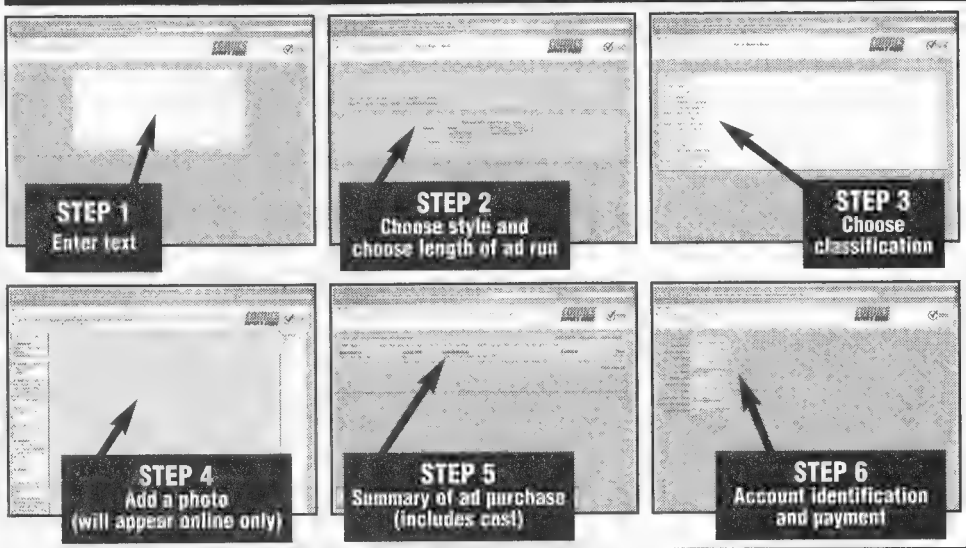

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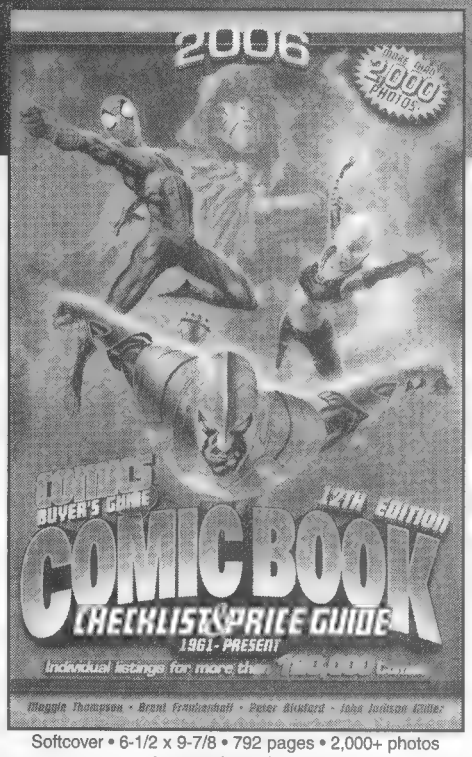

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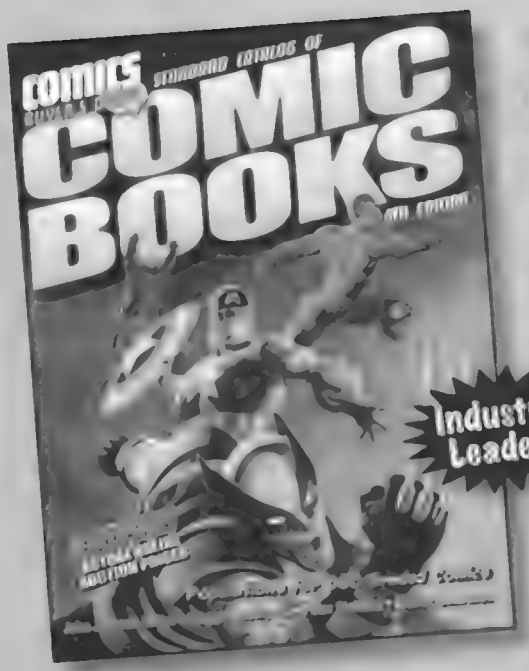

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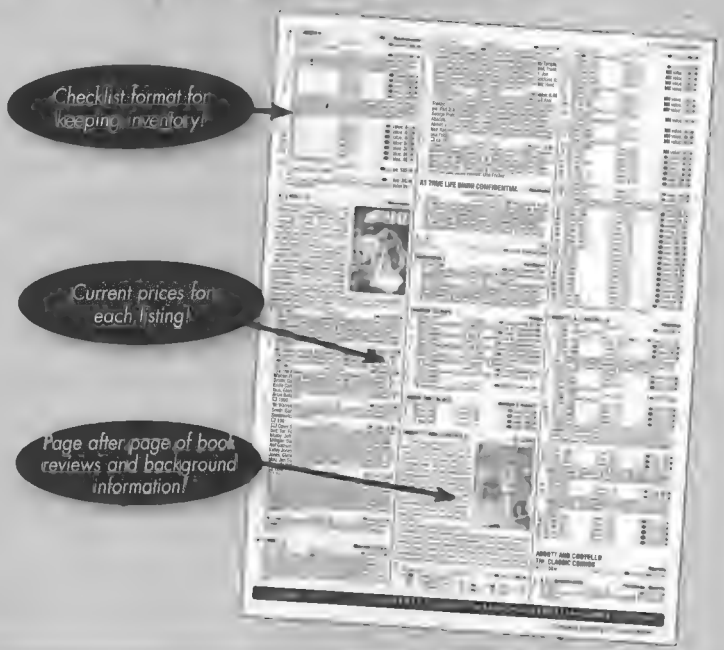

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Ally Sloper as he appeared in 1870.

We've talked about comic-book movies and that there's a history of such projects.

I just turned up my copy of the 1953 hardcover from the Library of Congress' Copyright Office: *Motion Pictures, 1894-1912 Identified from the Records of the United States Copyright Office* by Howard Lamarr Walls. The first registration Walls found was "Edison Kinetoscopic Record of a Sneeze," January 7, 1894. The last was "Feast of Belshazzar," copyright Jan. 23, 1913.

This does not mean this book contains *all* the comics-associated films of the period that were produced; not all such material was copyrighted. For example, Winsor McCay produced an animated version of his *Little Nemo* in 1911 and toured the vaudeville circuit with it. He created another, "The Story of a Mosquito," in 1912 and "The Centaurs" in 1913. (His famous "Gertie, the Trained Dinosaur" came in 1914, a year after this volume's coverage — and he did his own later version of *Dreams of a Rarebit Fiend*.) In fact, of all the copyrighted films in the book, *only* the McCay project was not involved with the newspaper cartoon offerings from William Randolph Hearst's empire. [Note that the cartoonist in the list that follows was not invariably or forever the sole creator.]

Alphonse and Gaston (not to mention their friend, Leon obsessed so on courtesy that they were frequently victims of resultant catastrophes.

"Ymir" in the forum Comics2Film.com did dig up information on the "Rarebit" project, though it was placed in the "Adapted to Theatrical Feature-Length Live-Action Film" list. (Note that it's about 10 minutes long.) But also dug out is the information that a film of the "Ally Sloper" character (created in 1867 by Marie Duval and Charles H. Ross) was directed by George Albert Smith (1864-1959) in 1898. So that means that the hapless but ever well-meaning "Happy Hooligan," comes in late again.

Among the listings in the book are so-called "Thumb Books" — more commonly known today as "flip books." Not produced as strips of film, they are individual pages which, when flipped through, provide an animated image.

There's a website via which fans can actually download some of (all of?) the surviving footage: *http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/vshtml/vsflme.html* site. It's interesting that the character for which I've been able to find the most film information — "Bunny" Schultze's Foxy Grandpa — is the one for which I've found the least reprint material. For that matter, the quick hunt for comics images turned out to be fun; I laughed out loud at Opper and Dirks material, for example. Both were masters of anticipation and reactive comedy.

In the course of checking the book (in the

In the 1903 film, the duo delayed drinking until a gunman arrived to "make 'em dance."

course of a speedy look-through), I found several of interest.

Alphonse and Gaston by Frederick Burr Opper (1857-1937) 1901-1904

Nov 11, 1902 "Alphonse & Gaston" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Nov 11, 1902.

Nov 11, 1902 "Alphonse & Gaston Helping an Irishman" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

"Alphonse and Gaston" #1 and #2 Oct 31, 1903, #3 Oct 27, 1903 American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. The third is viewable at the website.

And Her Name Was Maud by Frederick Burr Opper (1857-1937) 1904-1932

Feb 7, 1903 "His Name Was Mud" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. [perhaps not connected]

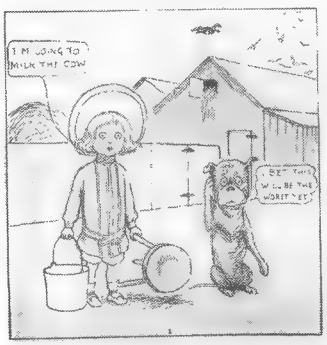
May 2, 1906 "Another Name Was Maude" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. [I'm willing to bet this was actually "And Her Name Was Maud" — like *Alphonse and Gaston*, an F. Burr Opper strip.]

Buster Brown by Richard Outcault (1863-1928) 1902-1920

Oct 28, 1903, Dec 21, 1903 "Buster's Joke on Papa" Thomas A. Edison

Mar 9, 1904 "Buster Brown Series" Thomas A. Edison

Mar 12, 1904 "Section of Buster Brown Series, Showing a Sketch of Buster by Outcault" Thomas A. Edison



Dec 16, 1904 "Buster and His Dog: Be a Good Boy" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Dec 16, 1904 "Buster and His Dog: Buster Quiet" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Many of the early Hearst characters crossed over from time to time. In 1903 are, background, left to right, cast members from Alphonse and Gaston and Happy Hooligan, foreground, left to right, Hooligan kids, Katzenjammer Kids' Mama, the Kids themselves (who have loaded the fireworks with explosives), and, um, a sailor whose name I can't find from Katzenjammer Kids. On the right is the Captain of the Kids' strip.

Dec 16, 1904 "Buster and His Dog: Good Dog" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Dec 16, 1904 "Buster and His Dog: The Instructions" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Dreams of a Rarebit Fiend by Winsor McCay (1869 or 1871-1934) 1904-1920

Feb 24, 1906 "Dream of a Rarebit Fiend" Scenes 1-9 Thomas A. Edison [The 10-minute live-action film was directed by *The Great Train Robbery*'s Edwin S. Porter, and one reviewer *http://filmyear.typepad.com/blog/2006/08/1906_dream_of_a.html* comments that it was accompanied by music by the Edison Military Band playing "The Dream of a Rarebit Fiend." However, I think the reviewer is commenting on the version available on *Unseen Cinema*, Disc 2. (Note: That disc also contains Lawrence Jordan and Joseph Cornell's 1938 "Thimble Theatre," but that's *not* based on Elzie Segar's Popeye-associated strip.) The short is also available on Kino Video's *Edison: The Invention of the Movies* and its *The Movies Begin* — from *www.kino.com*. In the version in that collection, at least, McCay receives no credit.]

Feb 13, 1908 "A Sculptor's Welsh Rabbit Dream" scenes 1-4 Edison Mfg. Co.

Of all the comics-to-film pioneers, it was only the often-misspelled Winsor McCay who turned his comics work into his own vaudeville act.

Foxy Grandpa (top stills) was still hot in 1902, when a crossover adventure featured (above) Tumble Tom by James Swinnerton, Alphonse and Gaston, Happy Hooligan, (below) Foxy Grandpa with the two boys, and the Katzenjammer Kids with Mama.

Foxy Grandpa by Charles Edward Schultze (1866-1939) 1900-1912

May 23, 1902 "The Boys Help Themselves to Foxy Grandpa's Cigars" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

May 23, 1902 "The Boys, Still Determined, Try It Again on Foxy Grandpa, with the Same Result" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

May 23, 1902 "The Boys Think They Have One on Foxy Grandpa, but He Fools Them" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Available from the website.

May 23, 1902 "The Boys Try to Put One up on Foxy Grandpa" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

May 23, 1902 "The Creators of Foxy Grandpa" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

May 23, 1902 "Foxy Grandpa and Polly in a Little Hilarity" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Available from the website, which adds that "Polly" is played by Hart's wife, Carrie DeMar and that this and "The Boys Think They Have One on Foxy Grandpa" were based on the stage musical *Foxy Grandpa* by William A. Brady starring Hart and DeMar.

May 23, 1902 "Foxy Grandpa Shows the Boys a Trick or two with the Tramp" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

May 23, 1902 "Foxy Grandpa Tells the Boys a Funny Story" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

May 23, 1902 "Foxy Grandpa Thumb Book" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

The staging is similar but the gags differ in Happy Hooligan's 1903 film and 1904 strip.

Happy Hooligan by Frederick Burr Opper (1857-1937) 1900-1932

Nov 16, 1900 "Hooligan Assists the Magician" Thomas A. Edison

Apr 6, 1901 "Happy Hooligan April-Fooled" Thomas A. Edison

Apr 6, 1901 "Happy Hooligan Surprised" Thomas A. Edison

Jan 16, 1902 "Happy Hooligan Turns Burglar" Thomas A. Edison

Jan 27, 1902 "The Twentieth Century Tramp; or Happy Hooligan and His Airship" Thomas A. Edison

Jun 20, 1903 "Happy Hooligan" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Available from the website.

Jul 6, 1903 "Happy Hooligan in a Trap" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Oct 6, 1903 "Hooligan in Jail" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Oct 6, 1903 "Hooligan to the Rescue" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Oct 8, 1903 "Happy Hooligan's Interrupted Lunch" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Oct 10, 1903 "Hooligan as a Safe Robber" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Oct. 19, 1903 "Hooligan's Roller Skates" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Nov 2, 1903 "Poor Hooligan, So Hungry Too" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Nov 10, 1903 "Hooligan's Thanksgiving Dinner (Thumb Book)" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Dec 1, 1903 "Hooligan's Christmas Dream" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Katzenjammer Kids by Rudolph Dirks (1877-1968) 1897-Present

Mar 18, 1903 "The Katzenjammer Kids Have a Love Affair" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

Jul 18, 1903 "Katzenjammer Kids and School Marm" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co.

In alphabetical order (for those on the prowl for actual films), then:

"Alphonse & Gaston" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Nov 11, 1902.

"Alphonse and Gaston" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. 1-2 Oct 31, 1903; 3 Oct 27, 1903. #3 available.

"Alphonse & Gaston Helping an Irishman" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Nov 11, 1902

"Another Name Was Maude" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 2, 1906

"The Boys Help Themselves to Foxy Grandpa's Cigars" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902

"The Boys, Still Determined, Try It Again on Foxy Grandpa, with the Same Result" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902

"The Boys Think They Have One on Foxy Grandpa, but He Fools Them" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902

"The Boys Try to Put One up on Foxy Grandpa" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902

"Buster and His Dog: Be a Good Boy" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Dec 16, 1904

"Buster and His Dog: Buster Quiet" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Dec 16, 1904

"Buster and His Dog: Good Dog" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Dec 16, 1904

"Buster and His Dog: The Instructions" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Dec 16, 1904

"Buster Brown Series" Thomas A. Edison Mar 9, 1904

"Buster's Joke on Papa" Thomas A. Edison Oct 28, 1903, Dec 21, 1903

"The Creators of Foxy Grandpa" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902

"Dream of a Rarebit Fiend" Scenes 1-9 Thomas A. Edison Feb 24, 1906

"Foxy Grandpa and Polly in a Little Hilarity" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902. Available.

"Foxy Grandpa Shows the Boys a Trick or two with the Tramp" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902

"Foxy Grandpa Tells the Boys a Funny Story" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902

"Foxy Grandpa Thumb Book" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. May 23, 1902

"Happy Hooligan" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Jun 20, 1903. Available

"Happy Hooligan and His Airship" See "The Twentieth Century Tramp"

"Happy Hooligan April-Fooled" Thomas A. Edison Apr 6, 1901

"Happy Hooligan in a Trap" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Jul 6, 1903

"Happy Hooligan Surprised" Thomas A. Edison Apr 6, 1901

"Happy Hooligan Turns Burglar" Thomas A. Edison Jan 16, 1902

"Happy Hooligan's Interrupted Lunch" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Oct 8, 1903

"His Name Was Mud" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Feb 7, 1903

"Hooligan as a Safe Robber" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Oct 10, 1903

"Hooligan Assists the Magician" Thomas A. Edison Nov 16, 1900

"Hooligan in Jail" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Oct 6, 1903

"Hooligan to the Rescue" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Oct 6, 1903

"Hooligan's Christmas Dream" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Dec 1, 1903

"Hooligan's Roller Skates" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Oct. 19, 1903

"Hooligan's Thanksgiving Dinner (Thumb Book)" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Nov 10, 1903

"Katzenjammer Kids and School Marm" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Jul 18, 1903

"The Katzenjammer Kids Have a Love Affair" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Mar 18, 1903

"Poor Hooligan, So Hungry Too" American Mutoscope & Biograph Co. Nov 2, 1903

"A Sculptor's Welsh Rabbit Dream" scenes 1-4 Edison Mfg. Co. Feb 13, 1908

"Section of Buster Brown Series, Showing a Sketch of Buster by Outcault" Thomas A. Edison Mar 12, 1904

"The Twentieth Century Tramp; or Happy Hooligan and His Airship" Thomas A. Edison Jan 27, 1902

Note: Historian and conservator Bill Blackbeard is responsible for my being able to access some of the comics images. His work on The Hyperion Library of Classic American Comic Strips (1977) volume *Happy Hooligan 1904-1905* gave me Happy. His work with others put together *The Comic Strip Century aka 100 Years of Comic Strips* (1995). Other sources included Dover's *Buster Brown Early Strips in Full Color* (1974), Stephen Becker's *Comic Art in America* (1959), Fantagraphics Book's *Daydreams and Nightmares: The Fantastic Visions of Winsor McCay* (2005), and David Kunzle's *The History of the Comic Strip: The Nineteenth Century* (1990).

Does any film survive of the transition of the Dirks' Kids (above) to film?

Do you know?

MAGGIE THOMPSON despite the impression of many (including some around the office here), had never seen these films when they were originally released. Similarly, her knowledge of the strips brought to the screen has ever been dependent upon tomes of reference material, rather than her memories of their newspaper appearances. Hey, those newspapers were published before her parents were born. The point is that chances are you have information on the topic of comics to silent films that she doesn't possess. Please share it via ***CBG*** Editorial Dept., 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54945, or *ohso@krause.com. And you can also share such data at www.cbgxtra.com.* Please do!

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www.cbgxtra.com

ONE FAN'S TOP 10 COVERS

Ted Krasniewski
54 Wales Ave.
Jersey City, NJ 07306

Some thoughts and a proposition:

Of the more than 40 glossy full-color pages your mag now contains each month, by far the best use you make of them is the *10 Favorite Comic-Book Covers* feature.

I wouldn't mind seeing those showcased covers reproduced even larger — about 3½x5 inches each, printed sideways, two to a page?

Seeing the same classics turn up over and over is a mixed blessing. Even a cover that makes the list for the nth time is accompanied by fresh personal commentary.

Unlike some, I'm always ready to hear about the ways a classic item became part of someone's life — and the old motto, "Be kind — every month it's somebody's first time," be it ever so abused, remains true. One of the main attractions of the feature, for me, is how it spotlights art I've never seen before, obscure gems that, once glimpsed, I lust to possess. More than a few want lists, I'm sure, have been lengthened by the relevant particulars of an item or two brought to light here.

So I wondered what a list of my own, honestly compiled, eschewing all "historically significant" covers along with all those that derive their value from sentimental association, might look like.That list is here appended, and, looking it over, well, whaddaya know: I can't say I've seen much of it on anyone else's list thus far. And even at 2½x3½ inches, it makes a dandy full-color gallery, if I may so toot. But who am I to suggest that your esteemed editorial selves allocate three glossy color pages to my non-professional appointments?

Maybe non-pro ***CBG*** readers could be invited to submit their own favorite-cover lists to be considered for full-color treatment, with the feature expanded to showcase, by turns (or side-by-side), both a professional and non-pro? Some readers' lists, I know, have already received limited showcasing in ***CBG***, in the black-and-white pages — but the subject really cries out for nothing less than a full-color format.

Credit me simply as the "Unknown Comics Fan," call me "Ish by Mail," lowly subscriber. I seek not fame, but grant, oh powers, might ***CBG*** take a good look at these seldom-singled-out beauties:

(1) *Rip Hunter, Time Master* #4 (Sep-Oct 61) (DC) — A prime example of the necessity of full-color presentation, because the colors here are so much a part of what give this Nick Cardy cover beauty.

(2) *Classics Illustrated: The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells (#124, Jan 55) — Wells' own description of the Martian war machines took a back seat to the awesome redesign they were given in the great '53 George Pal film, and then this comic book appeared with yet another, and equally spectacular, depiction that instantly relegated Wells' original conception to a distant third place. I like the "twinkle" effect here.

(3) *Four-Color Comics* #1256 (Feb-Apr 62) (Dell) — Otherwise known as *Kona, Monarch of Monster Isle* #1. When I look at what routinely passes for "fully painted" nowadays, I dig this one out, lest I become confused. One of the finest painted comic-book covers I expect to ever see.

(4) *Rawhide Kid* #25 (Dec 61) (Atlas) — Wide golden wrist-bands, a purple jacket, a bright orange leg-holster, immaculate white hat and gloves: The Kid's outfit, as evidenced here, provides reason enough for why the little stranger was always at the center of a brawl. The pile-driving, guns-blazing, in-your-face weight of the horse and dark rider bearing down on the aforementioned bit of exotic sartorial foreground detail, the blue-white air littered with suspended shards of glass — do Jack Kirby and Dick Ayers give me here what William Blake called the "lineaments of gratified desire"? Hmm. But yep.

(5) *Magnus, Robot Fighter: 4000 A.D.* #13 (Feb 66) (Gold Key) — This is probably the most strikingly beautiful of the painted *Magnus* series, with maybe a bit of Adam Strange-ish vibe. (Another finely rendered contender is #4.)

(6) *Fantastic Four* #29 (Aug 64) (Marvel) — A beautiful token of Chic Stone's stint as inker on the title. If this was ever made a poster, I missed it. If it wasn't, how come?

(7 and 8) *Tales to Astonish* #25 (Nov 61) and #34 (Aug 62) (Atlas) — Two of the best of Kirby's "monster" covers. Reality weds fantasy before a 6-year-old's eyes, neither sacrificing a gram of substance nor an iota of wonder. When I heard of someone planning a summer around a visit to Chartres cathedral that he might wax enraptured over the ineffable blue depths of the old stained glass, I understood — how different could it be from what I experience each time I re-visit these classic evocations in the Kirby cathedral?

(9) *Tales of Suspense* #71 (Nov 65) (Marvel) — The quintessentially heroic Iron Man cover. He looks ready to drop, he may already be unconscious, he's packed everything he's got into the wallop, he can't know — but we can see that he's struck the telling blow, he's taken The Titanium Man out with it, he's done the job.

(10) *Fantastic Four* #48 (Mar 66) (Marvel) — By my own rules, this shouldn't be on my list, since it's a landmark Marvel issue — but the legitimate poetry of that cover trumps all argument. The giant figure of The Watcher, with an expression of fearful awe on his face, shepherds a stunned-looking crown of humanity. At the forefront of the crowd, standing thus symbolically on the front

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line between mankind and the fearsome threat facing it, are The FF, not in their super-powered capacity (the scene suggests that the threat is so dire their special abilities are irrelevant), but simply as fellow human beings. The photographic super-reality of the Jack Kirby/Joe Sinnott team was the perfect vehicle here.

So there's my pitch. Did it land in the weeds?

Maggie: *Oh, moannn. As a regular feature, we probably won't go there. But take a look at* ***Page 32****. Just this once and at horrendously reduced size.*

Brent: *Maggie's right: We probably won't do the color version of this on a regular basis, but we encourage others to post their Top 10 online at* ***www.cbgxtra.com*** *or send us their lists for* ***Oh, So?***

WHAT A DRIPPLE

Gary L. Watson
160 Sandstone Loop E.
Westerville, OH 43081

Recently, I've embarked on a project of scanning covers and indexing books for the Grand Comic Book Database — certainly a time-consuming and non-paying task.

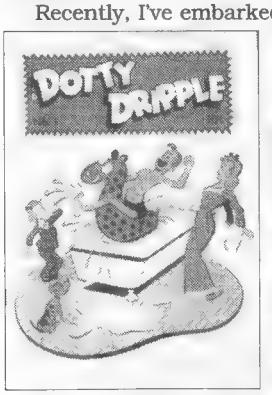
I was disappointed that a lot of information on coverless books that I obtained at various conventions or from eBay was often out of order for story sequences or simply non-existent, with only a cover scan of the issue as a placeholder.

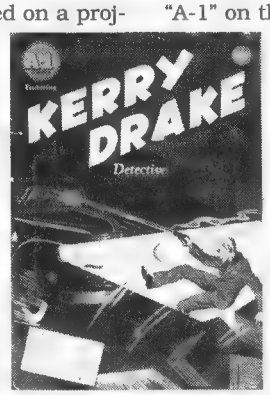
Using GCD, I decided to index the first 10 issues of *A-1 Comics*, since I had recently acquired one of these issues. Imagine my surprise: I find the first issue of *Dotty Dripple* holding the first-issue spot of the series. *Dotty Dripple* #1 — No, it couldn't be.

Who got the idea that it was? Grabbing *Overstreet*, I look up *A-1* (One) and looky here: Someone has decided to call *Dotty Dripple* #1 *A-1* #1.

So that's why it's holding the GCD spot.

Granted, *Kerry Drake* may be the first issue — I own the book. It has "A-1" on the cover and no number inside. *Dotty Dripple* #1 has no "A-1" on the cover or in the indicia. (I also own that book.)





Overstreet says there is no #2, which I agree with, since I've never seen a copy, but take a look in *Gerber's Photojournal*. See that comic book that occupies the #1 spot?

That's the true #1, or the missing #2 if you take the *Kerry Drake* to be #1. (I also own this book.) There is no number on the cover or in the indicia. It certainly has a big "A-1" on the cover.

So who got the idea to decide *Dotty Dripple* #1 was *A-1* #1 and had it listed in *Overstreet* that way?

It's keeping me from indexing the contents of the real #1, because it occupies that space, and the boys at the GCD won't change it until the information is in *Overstreet*.

It is not possible to publish all letters received, and we cannot reply to letters that we don't print. Letters submitted to ***Oh, So?*** for publication become the property of F+W Publications. Letters will be edited and may be cut due to length and other considerations. If any of your message — including your address — is not for publication, please indicate that in your message.

CREATING A COMICS GALLERY

Philipp Lenssen
Germany

I just read your article on whether *Amazing Fantasy* #15 or *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 had a higher print run (John Jackson Miller, ***CBG*** #1623, page 46).

I held the former in my hands recently, as a safe was opened for me in a local comic-book store. (Nope, I couldn't afford it.)

I wanted to let you know about

a hobby project of mine: *www.cover browser.com.*

Using a variety of web APIs, I collected thousands of comic-book covers, each linked to its source, for easy "gallery"-style browsing. Hopefully, it's interesting to you.

Keep up your work at ***CBG***!

NAME THAT COVER?

Jerry King

I've recently added some coverless books to my collection and need your help. If anyone can find out what issues these are, I appreciate the help. The indicia are missing, of course.

There's one *World's Finest*, a *Batman*, a *Wonder Woman*, and a Charles Biro book. All are from the Golden Age.

Hope to hear from someone.

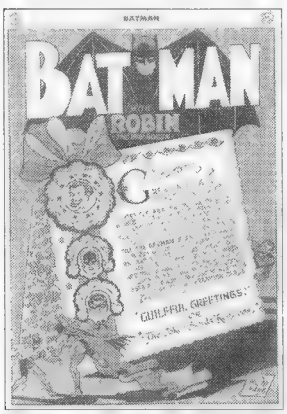
Brent: *I found the four comic books at* ***www.comics.org*** *(The Grand Comics Database) with a cover gallery and "Story Title" search.*

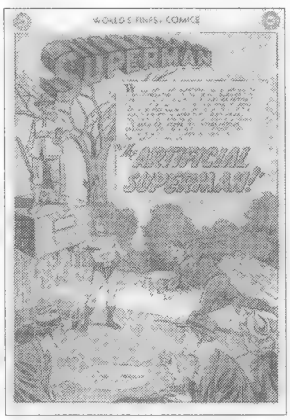
The ***World's Finest*** *is #57 (Mar-Apr 52).*

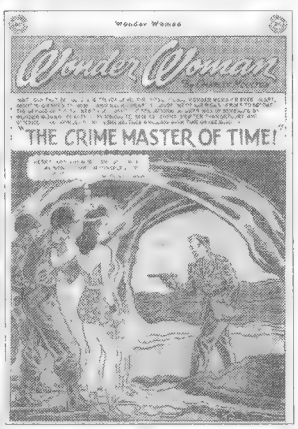
The ***Batman*** *is #46 (Apr-May 48).*

The ***Wonder Woman*** *is #53 (May-Jun 52).*

And the Crimebuster is ***Boy Comics*** *#56 (Aug 50).*







FOR WANT OF A DIRECT QUOTATION

Manny Fiori

To: The Flying Knuckles Ranch

I thought the following tidbit of literary research may be of interest to you and your loyal readers. In your column for ***CBG*** #1623 (page 50), you have a little ditty of a quote attributed to Benjamin Franklin. It is not an accurate direct quotation. With "all props to you," here, I include the actual source material. Drum roll, please.

Jacula Prudentum

For want of a nail
the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe
the horse was lost,
For want of a horse
the Knight was lost,
For want of a Knight
the battle was lost,
So it was that a Kingdom was lost
All for the want of a nail.

The preceding verse was written by an English metaphysical poet named George Herbert. The form is a colloquial verse. To my current research, it was written in 1651.

From the limestone bat caves of ancient history, to the winding pathways of world literature, many thanks for your time and attention.

BACKING UP

Will Edelman

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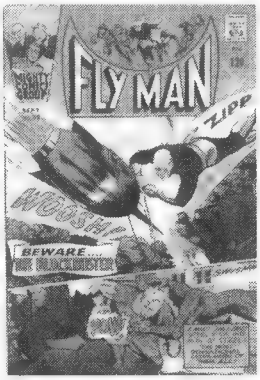
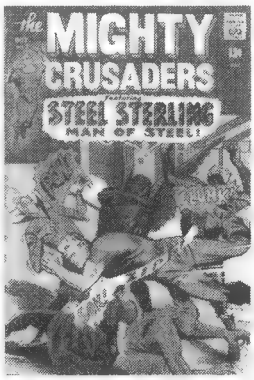
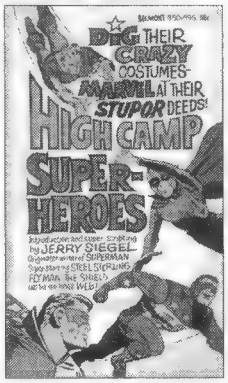
Los Angeles, CA 90043

Several days ago, I sent a letter with regard to Mr. Silver Age's request about information for Golden Age crossovers. I have since looked up his original article. I was under the impression his definition of a crossover story had to include other super-heroes appearing in different titles. But he also briefly mentioned *Batman* #217 and *Detective* #399, involving just Batman.







If that's the case, there are two other Silver Age crossover stories he didn't mention. I don't have a computer so I can't write to him directly. This is not intended to be a formal letter. If you think this information would be of interest to him, you can just pass it along.

Blue Beetle was the back-up story in *Captain Atom*. This was the new Blue Beetle. What happened to the old one? The police wanted to know, too. Well, not about Blue Beetle, exactly, but rather his alter ego, Dan Garrett. They suspected foul play, and Ted Kord, the new Blue Beetle, was their prime suspect. The Blue Beetle got his own book and in the first issue the mystery was explained and the police investigation ended, so it was the conclusion of the storyline.

The second crossover story involving just one character has a bizarre backstory. Circa 1966, Mighty Comics (imprint for Archie Comics) published two titles, *Flyman* and *The Mighty Crusaders*. In *Flyman* #39, they published a Steel Sterling story and the conclusion appeared in *Mighty Crusaders* #7 (Oct 66). Both were the final issues of its respective title. But this was actually a reprint and its first time in a comic book. The publisher had planned to give Steel Sterling his own book, but it never came out. Several months earlier, Belmont had published a pocket-sized paperback, *High Camp Superheroes*, with black-and-white interiors of *Flyman* reprints from #36 and #37 and the same full-length

Steel Sterling story, which had not been published previously. The paperback version is slightly longer, as it had a subplot eliminated from the later printing.

MARKET 10 YEARS LATER

Michael Tierney
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

The distribution arm of comics compacted from something like seven or more distributors, down to three: At first, Marvel with Heroes World, DC exclusive with Diamond, and Capital City floating for a short time by signing as many publishers as possible to its own exclusive distribution contracts.

As a result, retailers were looking at three times the previous paperwork. And, with my having two stores, that made for a heck of a lot of paperwork.

But I don't think it was declining sales that sank Heroes World. Marvel CEO Terry Stewart's plan to take a regional distribution company and make it into a worldwide entity was a monumental failure. Heroes World management seemed to not be up to the challenge. A lot of rumors were flying around that I won't repeat. But I *can* say that, from what I saw as a retailer, those distribution staffers were amazingly incompetent. It's probably a matter of trying to grow too fast in too short a period of time.

I forget exactly when Capital City went under, but, by the time Marvel stopped the red ink hemorrhaging from the debacle known as Heroes World, Diamond was left as the last distributor standing.

I feel I should add a clarifier to that statement, because I've heard a lot of people try to vilify Diamond CEO Steve Geppi for *being* the sole survivor. Geppi bought out failing companies that he could have just let fall, but Steve stated that he felt that doing that would have caused damage to the industry — which it certainly would have done. So, by accepting the debt and liabilities of those failing distributors, Geppi also kept a lot of publishers afloat who would have otherwise had to declare bankruptcy.

The double-whammy that this whole distributor collapse had on the industry was that it definitely reduced print runs. Instead of several distributors buying extra stock to fill orders, you only had one. And Diamond was now operating more as a fulfillment service, not as a distributor, which meant that it was serving the publisher, not the retailer. And, if the publisher decided not to print extra — well, tough luck if you sold out.

In olden days, when I'd be looking for extra stock, I could just start calling distributors. Somewhere, someone would have what I was looking for. It was their bait to get me to give them more of my business.

Nowadays, the distribution process is essentially eliminated. We're dealing more directly with Marvel and DC than ever before. But it's those independent guys who really got left holding the short end of the stick after the distribution collapse.

So there's an extra element to the numbers being down today as compared to 10 years ago.

None of which means that comics actually aren't selling as well or better. There's just less *overstock* being stacked on shelves in anticipation of retailer reorders. And, heck, just because *retailers* order certain quantities, it doesn't mean that those copies are all actually selling to readers.

And in today's marketplace, I think you'll find a lot fewer retailers stocking extra copies in storage than you did 10 years ago. That's a double whammy hit on print runs — triple whammy, if you then factor the wait-for-the-trade customers.

So, all things considered, today's market is maybe stronger than the numbers reflect. Emphasis on the "maybe."

Yet another sign of the comics industry's growing awareness that it needs the youth market back has been an ongoing campaign by DC Comics in *Retailing Today* magazine. For months now, DC has been heavily promoting its comics line there.

In previous months, I've pulled out some nice, generic posters. In the Oct. 23 issue is another poster: a double-page spread featuring bust shots of Superman and Batman standing side by side, along with the tagline, "Boys want to be fire-

men, policemen and these men" (in bold letters, followed in smaller type by) "Boys don't want to just be Superman. Or just Batman. They want to be both. Bring the retail power of the two most iconic superheroes of all time to your floor and be a Super Hero Destination." (Followed by the WB Consumer Product logo and the DC Super Heroes logo.)

So the publishers realize that they need once again to expand their presence in the marketplace beyond the traditional comic-book stores. Heck, as a comics retailer, I'd welcome that. More places for people to be introduced to comics are more potential future customers for me.

But if the "boys" targeted in these ads are sold comics intended for Mature Readers by accident, any outlets gained by this ad campaign won't be around for long.

Information guidelines are better tools for success, proper tools for the job.

Regarding another way the comics world is reaching the general public: I missed the first episode of *Heroes*. By the time I heard Jeph Loeb was involved and that the series was worth a look, I was only able to catch the second episode and half of the third on TiVo. So I waited until last Friday and watched every episode I had, back to back, through the seventh.

It was really good. Watching so many episodes one after another really had the pace moving well, and I'm guessing that I'm pretty well caught up on what I missed. However, I do wonder about the significance of the eclipse.

One mystery that might be solved with the pieces I've missed is the identity of the mysterious Linderman, the Vegas guy who lends money to the flying political candidate and manipulates others. I'm wondering if this unseen person will turn out to be the same guy as the cheerleader's mysterious adopted father.

And about that missing painting in Linderman's hands: Why couldn't they have just asked for a picture of it? That'd given them the clues, just as the original painting would have. And wouldn't the art agent have in her files somewhere a picture of what she'd sold?

Those questions aside, it's still an enjoyable show. I also like the way that they don't run away from their comics influences, all the way from the precog telling the future in comic-book form to the way the opening story titles are presented in comic-book format.

This is a fairly edgy, mature series with a lot of mature content and violence, what with the sexual situations, a drug-addicted hero, people with their heads sawed open and brains removed, and the cheerleader waking up to find her chest flesh peeled away for an autopsy. So this is probably a good form of outreach to the older reader at whom the comics industry is now aiming so much of its products.

Ray: *I was also indoctrinated by watching the first four episodes of the show back-to-back. And you raise a good point about them just asking for a photograph of the painting. One of the subtleties I enjoy is that the symbol used to identify the heroes via the dead professor's computer program is everywhere. In the first episode, it appears in one of Isaac's painting and even in the pool (look at the hose/water-cleaning device on the pool's surface) at the Sylar crime scene, where Officer Parkman finds the little girl. Good stuff.*

WHAT'S YOUR DC STAMP IQ?

Jack Dumpert

Go to the post office and buy a sheet of DC super-hero stamps. How many of the artists whose work appears can you identify?

Clue: Pretty much all of the greats are represented.

Clue: Three of the reproduced covers are signed.

Check your answers on the back of the sheet.

Oh, by the way, I got a passable 15 out of 20.

George Pérez pointed to his stamp at Comic-Con International: San Diego 2006

WHAT'S YOUR AGE AGAIN?

Chris Murphy
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

I kind of like just having a Golden Age, a Silver Age, a Bronze Age, and a Modern Age. Then, there are periods within each of those ages: periods such as a "Western" period from the Golden Age. The Modern Age includes a period for independents, black and whites, the grim and gritty, *etc.*

Periods can and do overlap — as do the Ages themselves, which is why no one can agree exactly when and with what comic it starts and stops.

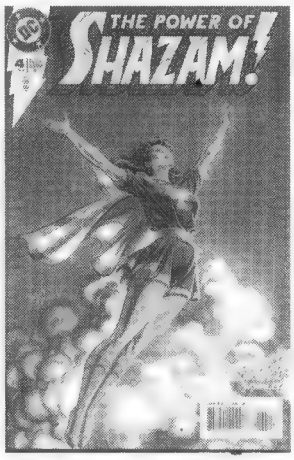
Enough years have passed that I have only just *begun* to use and accept the Bronze Age — and I sometimes still grit my teeth when I hear it — but, in my opinion, ages can only be designated every 30 to 40 years or so after they start. So I really can't use the term Copper Age right now — maybe in the year 2020?

Secret Wars would overlap from the Bronze Age and the Modern Age for me, leaning mainly into the Modern Age. At one time, this so-called Bronze Age was my Modern Age, being as I was born in the Silver Age.

NEWEST *SHAZAM*

Adam Golden

Back in the 1990s, by *Power of Shazam* #4 (Jun 95), I was in love with that title. I couldn't wait for each issue. That's not to say I didn't have some problems with the series. I didn't care for Dr. Sivana being portrayed as a Lex Luthoresque millionaire or Uncle Dudley as an alcoholic janitor and I felt later that the wizard



FULL FRONTAL NERDITY by Aaron Williams

Shazam became far too powerful. In fact, I'd say Jerry Ordway lost a lot of creative juices after #12. If it were up to me, beginning with #13, I would have moved Ordway to drawing the art and brought on a new writer, preferably one who had been writing *The Batman Adventures*, such as Ty Templeton, Kelley Puckett, or Scott Peterson.

But that was then, and now we are at the fourth issue of *Trials of Shazam*. I hate that title. Judd Winick has turned the adventures of The Big Red Cheese into some kind of illegitimate spin-off of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or *Charmed*. You've got to be kidding me with this Council of Merlin.

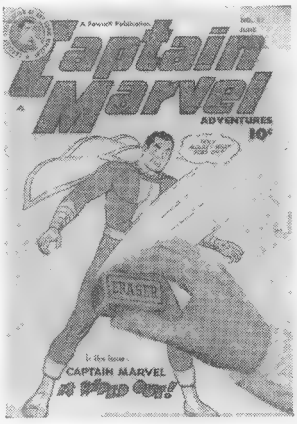
I am offended by Winick (1) claiming that King Solomon is a god, and (2) portraying him as a woman.

I always believed Freddy Freeman and Captain Marvel Jr. were Jewish. After all, his name is Freeman, and the mortal enemy who killed his grandfather is Captain Nazi. DC seems to have a problem with being successful with minority heroes.

Well, here's a potential Jewish super-hero that goes back to the 1940s, and what do they do? Give him "Christopher" for a middle name and tattoo him.

I have searched every inch of the covers of all four issues for the Elseworlds imprint, but I can't find it. *Trials of Shazam* has to be an Elseworlds mini-series. If it's not, it should be recognized/retconned as one.

What needs to be done is to establish that *Trials of Shazam* is an Elseworlds tale or a nightmare that Uncle Dudley had after eating bad fish. Then a new, ongoing Shazam title needs to start with the great Alex Ross painting the covers, co-writing the plots, and, if possible, pencilling the interior art. Either Paul Dini or Ty Templeton should finish the scripts. Rick Burchett should be the inker — and penciller, if Ross can't do it. Fill-in pencillers who should be kept on tap are Alan Weiss, Cameron Stewart, Darwin Cooke, and Brad Rader; I'd love to see Bruce Timm draw an issue. Ideally, *Shazam* should be the comic for all ages with a special magic for adults who want to feel like kids again, not unlike *Batman: The Animated Series*. Add Alex Ross' glorious art, and that would be a winner.



Captain Marvel is one of the great icons and cornerstones of comic-book super-heroes. Throughout the 1940s, his comics consistently outsold Superman's.

It's as if DC only bought the copyright to the character to prevent any other publisher from restoring Captain Marvel to his true greatness. But the thing is DC doesn't have to fear Captain Marvel. It has him now, so it's OK to make him great again.

If he starts outselling Superman, DC still makes all the money, so stop sabotaging this great character. Put Alex Ross on it and let them both soar as high as they can.

SEARCHING FOR BOND

Alan J. Porter
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Round Rock, TX 78681

I was interested to read Nelson Jimenez' question in ***CBG*** #1625 (page 180) about who owns the current U.S. comics rights to James Bond. I've e-mailed Ian Fleming Publications — the literary rights owners — a couple of times with this exact question but have yet to receive any sort of response.

I do know that they have plans to release a new series of Bond graphic novels starting in 2008 as part of the Fleming centenary celebrations. The books will be adaptations of the *Young Bond* series of novels written by Charles Higson. The first is an adaptation of *SilverFin* and will be illustrated by Kev Walker.

To answer Jimenez' question on the publishers that have produced Bond comics over the years, my research has uncovered the following:

• United Kingdom — *The Daily Express* comic strips ran from 1958 to 1977, followed by a short-lived run in *The Sunday Express* and *The Daily Star* that finished in 1981. As Maggie mentioned, these are now being collected by Titan Books in a series of reprint albums with excellent supporting material.

• United States — DC published *Showcase* #43 (Apr 63), a *Doctor No* movie adaptation, and this

was also published in the UK under the *Classics Illustrated* label (#158A). That was followed by Marvel in 1981 with an adaptation of the Roger Moore film *For Your Eyes Only* in a variety of formats. Marvel tried again with *Octopussy* before the license

switched to Eclipse, which also produced another movie adaptation, Timothy Dalton's *License to Kill*. Eclipse also published the first original Bond comics story to appear in the United States in 1989 with *Permission to Die* by Mike Grell. Dark Horse picked up the rights to Bond in 1992 and produced a series of original series, *Serpent's Tooth, A Silent Armageddon, Light of My Death* (which appeared in *Dark Horse Presents*), *Shattered Helix, Minute of Midnight* (which also appeared in *DHP*), and *The Quasimodo Gambit*. When Pierce Brosnan took over the role of 007 on the movie screen, the license switched to Topps, where a three-issue adaptation of *Goldeneye* was planned but only the first issue was ever published (Jan 96). There hasn't been any Bond material from a U.S. publisher in the 10 years since.

In Japan, Saito Productions produced four titles that were very loose adaptations of Fleming novels, which first ran in the *Boys Life* anthology. They were later collected as individual albums under the Golden Comic imprint. I've also seen evidence of these being published in Hong Kong.

The multi-national publishing company Semic produced a variety of Bond comics starting in 1965. These started off with translated reprints of the UK newspaper strips but then progressed to original stories and were published under a variety of series and titles in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

A Chilean publisher, Zig-Zag, produced a series between 1968 and 1970 that was a mix of *ad hoc* adaptations and original stories.

A few Bond stories were also published in an Italian anthology title but were reprints of the UK *Daily Express* strips.

If anyone else knows of other examples of Bond in comics, I'd love to hear from them.

SUICIDE THEORY FULL OF HOLES

Frank Cooper
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Helena, OK 73741

Having read "Hollywood Kryptonite" years ago, I have to agree with Peter David's assumptions (***CBG*** #1624, page 190). There was no reason for George Reeves to take his own life. We will probably never know who killed Reeves, but there are way too many holes in the suicide theory.

MORE RETRO OBLIGATORY

Alyssen Bills
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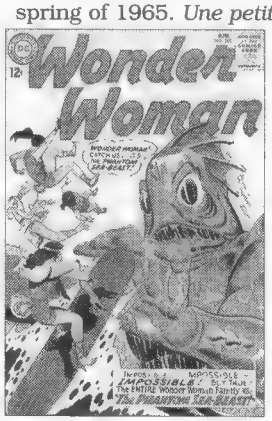
Portland, ME 04101

Wow. I loved the retro *Obligatory Fight Scene* in ***CBG*** #1623 (page 112). I always read the regular *Obligatory Fight Scenes* and find them both informative and amusing. I usually end up agreeing more with John Petty than with Jim Johnson, although not every time. I thought that *House of M* was great, despite the anticlimactic ending. However, the retro edition was the "bestest" (to misappropriate Roy Thomas's term). Please do more of them.

Some time ago, one of your correspondents, Mike Curtis, brought up the esoteric — and slightly silly — subject of food memories associated with the initial readings of specific comic books. *Apropos* of very little, my most indelible "food/funny book" memory is this: I absolutely, vividly recall eating a Mounds bar while reading *Fantastic Four* #50 with the sensational Silver Surfer on the cover, way back in that halcyon spring of 1965. *Une petite Madeleine*, anyone?

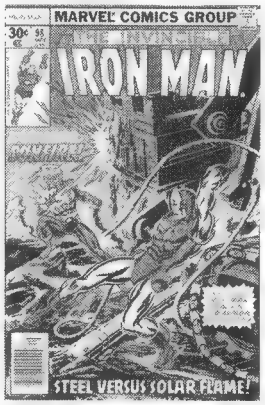


I know that you can't print the top 10 covers from all your readers, so I'll narrow my list down to my favorite cover: to wit, *Wonder Woman* #145 (Apr 64). Why? Well, it's the first comic I clearly remember reading all the way through and, perhaps more importantly, owning; I even got in trouble for bringing it to elementary school one day. Plus, I was fascinated by monsters even before I got into comics. And, oh, it is a pretty cool cover, isn't it, with the Phantom Sea-Beast rising out of the depths to attack Wonder Woman, Wonder Girl, Wonder Tot, and their mother — who are all riding the waves on a purple surfboard?

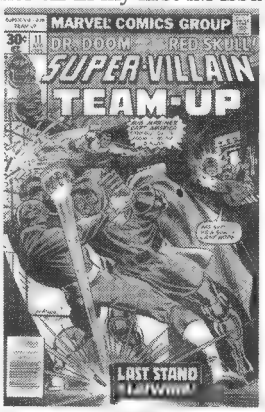
THE NEXT TEN

Bob Almond

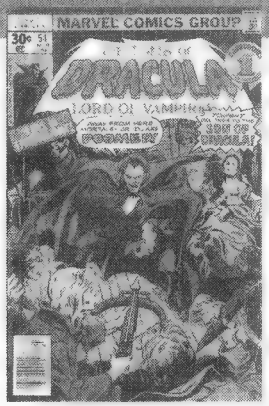
For those interested, since my retro-top-10-covers feature list ranneth over (***CBG*** #1626, page 115) and I needed to whittle it down from 21 to 10, here's my back-up list that missed the cut:



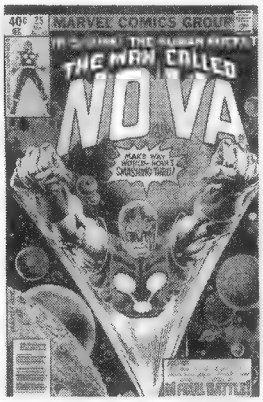
• *Iron Man* #98 (May 77) — Gil Kane and Dave Cockrum — As fine a cover artist as he was, I loved Dave's inks over other pencil artists. Sunfire, the Guardsman, and the pointy-head IM armor all in my first IM issue.



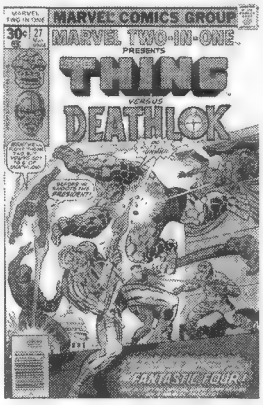
• *Super-Villain Team-Up* #11 (Apr 77) — Dave Cockrum and Joe Sinnott — Doom and the Red Skull rarely battle each other, but this was a big one.



• *Tomb of Dracula* #54 (Mar 77) — Gene Colan and Tom Palmer — My introduction to the moody mastery of Colan and Palmer.

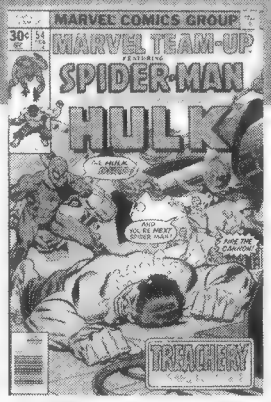


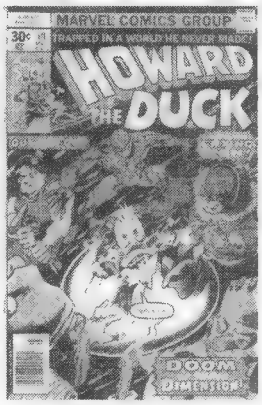
• *Nova* #25 (May 79) — Keith Pollard and Rudy Nebres — Not my first issue (#21), but a powerful cover to go out on.



• *Marvel Two-in-One* #27 (May 77) — Jack Kirby and Joe Sinnott — My first issue was #24 with a super Gil Kane Black Goliath and Hijacker cover, but this one may just edge it out with the cast of thousands involved.

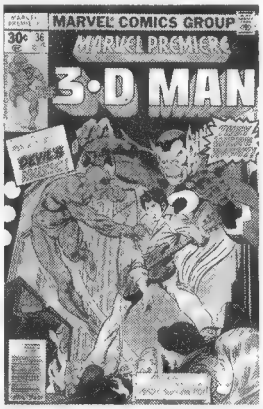
• *Marvel Team-Up* #54 (Feb 77) — Gil Kane — I just missed John Byrne's last issue of *X-Men* but at least I was in on the ground floor of John's great and many *MTU* issues.



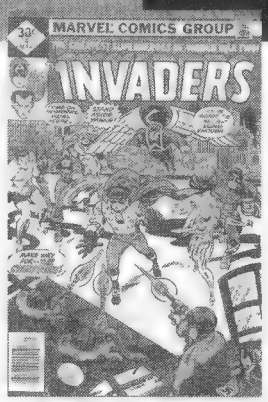


• *Howard the Duck* #10 (Mar 77) — Gene Colan and Steve Leialoha — "Waugh!"

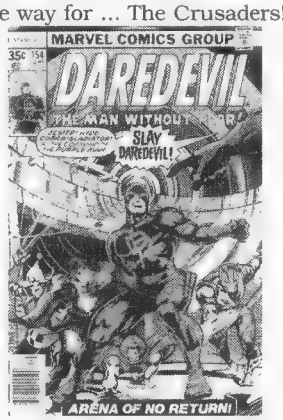
• *Ms. Marvel* #3 (Mar 77) — Al Milgrom and Joe Sinnott — For a long time I thought this image was by Jack. I loved the series.



• *Marvel Premiere* #36 (Jun 77) — Gil Kane and Joe Sinnott.



• *Invaders* #14 (Mar 77) — Jack Kirby and Joe Sinnott — It took me a while to get used to the Robbins and Springer interior art, but the Kirby cover welcomed me in, nonetheless. "Make way for ... The Crusaders!"



• *Daredevil* #154 (Sep 78) — Gene Colan and Steve Leialoha — Not my first issue (#143), but I love the "all my villains against me" covers.

MOVIES, EUROPE, AND MORE

Paul Dale Roberts
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Elk Grove, CA 95758

In 1996, I created a comic book called *The Legendary Dark Silhouette*, which from here on out will be referred to as *The Silhouette*. Through my website, *www.jazmaonline.com*, the New York movie producer Howard Nash discovered my character. Howard Nash is credited with such movies as *The Perfect Heist*, *Sleepless Nights*, *Children of the Night*, and *Tracks*, starring Ice-T, Chris Gunn, and John Heard. He also has a memorable PBS television credit under his belt, *Feliciano the Legend*, the true story of José Feliciano. What is remarkable is that he wants to create his first comic-book super-hero movie using my character.

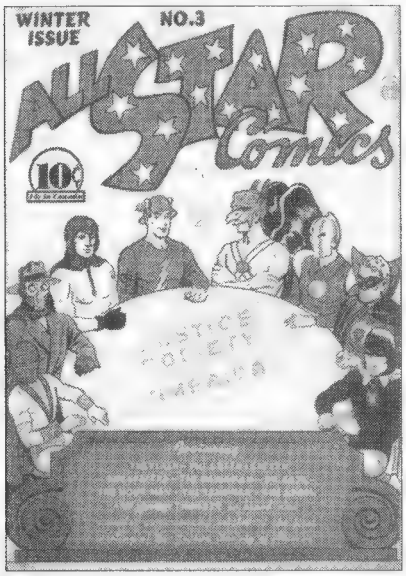
The Silhouette gained powers of flight, being able to change into a real shadow on a wall, partial indestructibility, super-strength, heal-

ing powers, and cosmic powers that radiate from his eyes and palms through a strange dimension known as Magdeline that is inhabited by an intelligent race of beings called the Gunliks.

The movie is a non-profit movie in which donations to The Silhouette Foundation, a non-profit organization, has been created. The donations will help underprivileged kids in need. Donors will get a special access code to communicate with Nash and his writers in which they will be able to evaluate, comment on the storyline, and help develop the screenplay. This is a chance for aspiring writers to work with an experienced movie producer in developing plotlines, scripts, storyboards, *etc.* If the donor's ideas are used, he or she will be credited on the final cut of the film. The Silhouette movie is a touch of drama, action, super-heroics, horror, science fiction, and fantasy. Not only will donors have a chance to be a part of this developing movie, but efforts will go for a good cause in assisting youths who are socially maladjusted, anti-social, or emotionally disturbed. If we don't help kids with special needs, who will?

By the way, I just came back from Berlin; Amsterdam, Netherlands; South and North Holland; and Belgium — and took some back issues of ***CBG*** with me for my layovers in Denver and Chicago. What a good way to entertain myself during these boring layovers! Thank you!

In ***CBG*** #1625, I learned something new. (I always learn something new when reading ***CBG***.) This time, I was shocked to learn that, when



All-Star Comics #3 made its debut in the winter of 1940, it contained the first inter-company crossover with All-American Comics and DC Comics; I had not known that and would have argued the point. Now, I understand, why it would have been the first inter-company crossover. I used to think that the first inter-company crossover was with Superman and Spider-Man. Boy, was I wrong.

Glad to hear about the *X-Men: The Last Stand* DVD coming out. I wish all comics, especially Golden Age and Silver Age, were placed on DVD. I can't afford a Golden Age comic book selling for $150 just so I can read the story. I *could* afford a DVD with Golden Age comic stories on it. When will someone do this? I guess there are too many copyright issues in doing a project like this. Rats.

I love the fact that Stan Lee is interacting with his created characters; he did this with Jack Kirby, where it shows Stan and Jack at Reed and Sue Richards' wedding in a *Fantastic Four* comic book. I can't believe Stan is making Ringo Starr into a super-hero; I am not too sure I want to see something like this. I was never a great fan of Ringo. What's this? Stan working with Hugh Hefner on *Hef's Super Bunnies*? I heard a rumor that Hef enjoyed comic books. I can't see the seriousness to a story like that but I will give it a shot.

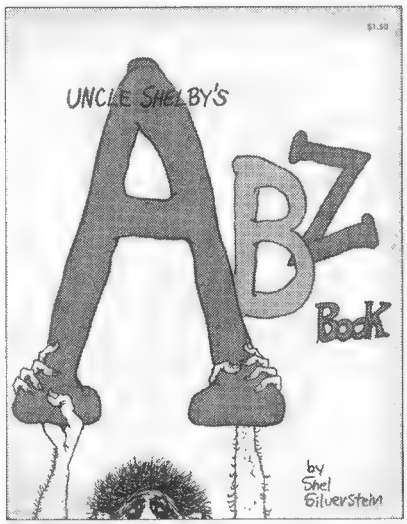
Regarding your feature "Whatever Happened to Mini Comics?" (Heidi MacDonald, ***CBG*** #1625, page 68): Are they diminished? Nope, not at all. I still get mini-comics in the mail to review. A lot of independent creators do mini-comics. You just don't see them at the comic-book store, because the creators sell their mini-comics via their websites. They still exist and will always exist.

Hail to Peter David (***CBG*** #1625, page 190) — he is correct with his comments. I had to laugh when Stan Lee was scolding the contestants on the Sci-Fi channel's *Who Wants to Be a Superhero?* when Spider-Man, his own creation, was telling the world that he was Peter Parker. I do believe secret identities are *passé*. Stan's echoing words: "Spider-Man would never give up his secret identity." Sorry, not true. But I love Stan, anyway.

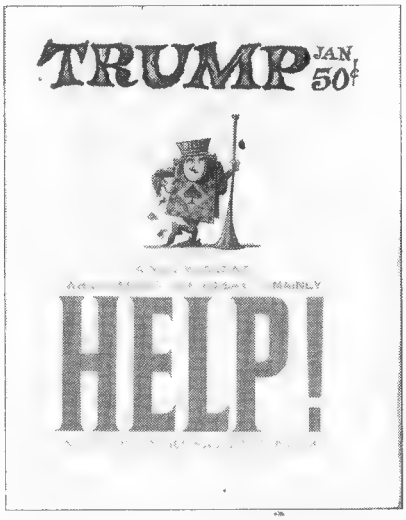
Brent: *In addition to Graphic Imaging Technologies' DVD-ROM collections (**www.gitcorp.com**) of more than 40 years of The Fantastic Four, The Avengers, The X-Men, and Spider-Man, the company has also released a compilation of **Mad** and a CD-ROM collecting the first 70 or so issues of **Ultimate X-Men**.*

*As for Golden Age collections, Richard Halegua (**www.comicsoncdrom.com**) has been offering CD-ROMs of scanned Golden Age books for years.*

Maggie: *Hugh Hefner was one of the earliest national figures to express fondness for comic art.*



Playboy *was a venue for Shel Silverstein's works (**Uncle Shelby's ABZ Book** first appeared there, for example), and Little Annie Fanny provided income for Harvey Kurtzman, Will Elder, and others. In fact, Hefner funded the two issues of **Trump** that were an experiment in publishing a high-end version of Kurtzman's **Mad** after Kurtzman left Bill Gaines' employ.*



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Why, back in my day ...

Remains of "THE DAY"

by **PETER DAVID**

We're sure no less touchy than we were back in the 1960s — perhaps even moreso.

I've noticed that people talk about "back in the day" a lot. That this is how comics were written "back in the day." That this was how Marvel Comics operated "back in the day." The way fans were "back in the day." The way conventions functioned "back in the day."

I was speaking with a Marvel editor not too long ago about how things were back in the day.

Part of what prompted it was the much-debated Michael Richards meltdown in which he hurled racial epithets at several hecklers, using a word so reviled, so horrific, so detestable, that news organizations can only refer to it by the first letter and the mere utterance of it is automatic proof that you're a racist — unless a black person uses it in song or casual conversation or in award-winning movies such as *Pulp Fiction*, in which case it's perfectly OK. It is, indeed, the only racist epithet I can think of in which the assignment of who is allowed to utter it with impunity is, itself, guided along racial lines. If something is acceptable for whites but *verboten* to blacks, that is, by definition, racist. So I fail to comprehend how the reverse is, likewise, *not* racist. Maybe it's because my musical tastes run toward movie soundtracks (nice to have one for background when writing) and '50s rock, but, if there are songs by Jewish performers that make liberal use of "the K word" or if Los Del Rio is prepping a comeback with a tune titled "The S Word," it's news to me.

And I was recalling how, back in the day, the personnel at Marvel routinely — and I mean *routinely* — addressed each other using racial epithets in casual conversation. The guys in the stat room particularly, but pretty much everyone in the Bullpen. I was stunned at first, when I initially began working there, but that quickly wore off. And they weren't racist, not a one of them. It was — I dunno. A sort of leveling mechanism, from which no one was exempt. A way of underscoring that, in the Bullpen's view, no one was better than anyone else. When you've got a bunch of guys working in close proximity (and the Bullpen was pretty squished back then) under intense deadline pressure, it's a recipe for occasional temper flaring. By casually using racial epithets in day-to-day friendly conversation, it robbed the words of any possible heat they could contain. Words, unlike bullets, only wound you as much as you allow them to. People understood that back in the day.

Now they don't. Words — be they comments along racist lines or sexist lines or whatever — are ascribed a sort of irresistibility that apparently makes ignoring them impossible and, instead, engenders reactions ranging from lawsuits to sensitivity classes and public *mea culpas* on radio talk shows. (Jesse Jackson has a talk show? Who knew?)

We look back upon the career of Lenny Bruce and shake our heads over how he was persecuted and prosecuted — with no sense of irony over the very great likelihood that, if he were operating today, he'd probably be persecuted and prosecuted. The famed Chevy Chase/Richard Pryor word association sketch from *Saturday Night Live* ("Spearchucker!" "Honky!" "Nigger!" "*Dead* honky!") would probably receive national protest, if it originated today. Which is not to say Michael Richards is Lenny Bruce or Richard Pryor ... he ain't. (Chevy Chase, maybe). But we're sure no less touchy than we were back in the 1960s — perhaps even moreso.

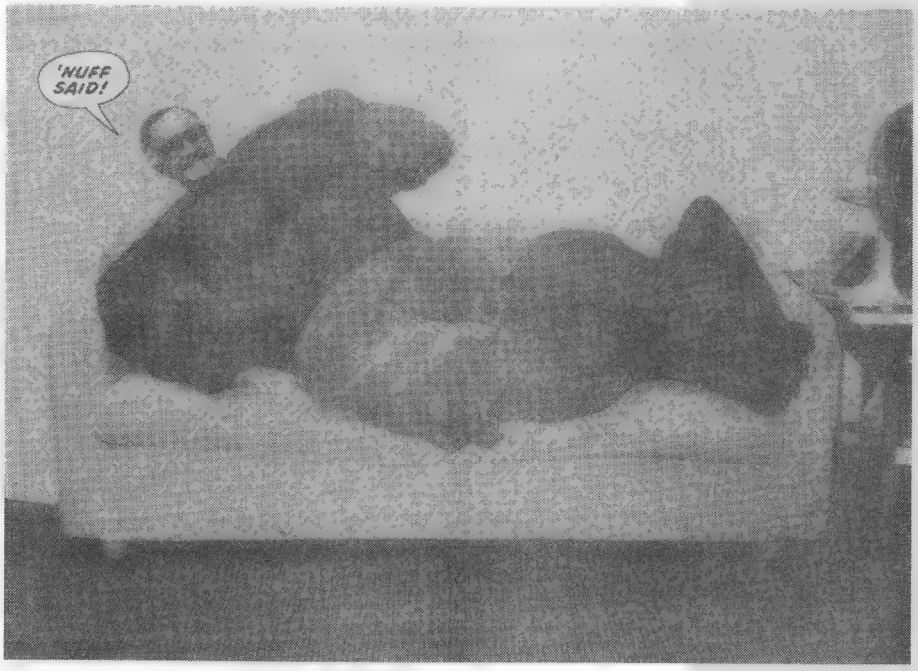
In any event, in pondering how things were back in the day, it occurred to me that, back in the day, we were oblivious to the fact that that was the day.

We didn't know that, 20 years down the line, people would be reflecting on the way comic books were written or comic-book companies managed or comic books sold in the marketplace and how much things had changed. We were just busy trying to get comic books out.

So I figure I'll tell some tales from the day.

I caution that they are merely my recollections, and memory can be a superbly tricky thing. The upside is that I can write with relative impunity, since everyone who was working at Marvel while I was in the offices in my position as Direct Sales Manager is no longer there.

Actually, on reflection, I take that back. Ralph Macchio, my editor on *Dark Tower*, remains. Ralph has such formidable survival skills that cockroaches hiding in the walls shake their heads in wonder and take extensive notes, planning for the day when bombs have leveled the world and they can anoint Ralph their leader.



The Day I Knew I Had Arrived

I worked in the actual offices at 387 Park Avenue South for some five years, but I remember clearly the moment that I knew I had actually "arrived." It was the day Stan Lee remembered my name.

I offer no insult to Stan in citing what Stan himself would be the first to admit: Memory is not his strong suit. ("Peter Parker" became "Peter Palmer," "Bruce Banner" became "Bob Banner" ... and that was back in the early 1960s, when, presumably, his recollection was sharper.) I'm pretty much the same way, actually; it takes me forever to remember people's names and then connect the names to the faces.

Back in the day, Stan stopped by the offices on a semi-regular basis, every couple months or so. There was always an additional electricity in the air on days Stan was there, a sense that anything could happen. One occasion involved Louise Jones. (Later Simonson. For a while, there were many fans who didn't know Louise Jones and Louise Simonson were the same person, and Weezie considered hitting the convention circuit splitting her time as Jones and Simonson. And at some, as Louise Jones, she'd badmouth that bitch Louise Simonson, and vice versa. But she never did, which is a shame, because it would have been a great hoax.) Weezie was busy taking photographs for the *Marvel Fumetti* book. And Stan kept saying, "So when do we do my nude centerfold?" And finally Weezie called him on it and got him to strip to his shorts and assume a reclining position on Jim Shooter's couch, with only a copy of the hilariously named *Giant Size Man-Thing* #1 obscuring his loins. Stan later thought better of it — which was probably wise — and his head was optically grafted onto a similarly posed guy in a Hulk costume, and that's what ran in the comic book.

Anyway, I wound up meeting Stan on five different occasions. Every time would be as the first, as I would introduce myself, or be introduced, as working in direct sales, and Stan would greet me warmly. It never bothered me that Stan didn't recall my name from one time to the next. Why on earth should he? He was Stan Lee and I was Some Guy In Sales.

So one day I was walking down the hallway, and there comes Stan in the other direction. I waved and said, "Hey, Stan." And Stan looked at me and said, "Hey ..." And he paused about half a heartbeat and said, "... Peter!"

I was stunned. I stood there grinning like an idiot, as Stan kept going, unaware that he had just made my day, my week, and quite possibly my month. The actual start date of my employment at Marvel was irrelevant: I had officially arrived in the comics industry, because Stan Lee knew who I was.

Just the other day I got a handwritten holiday card from Stan. Gotta tell you: The feeling never goes away.

The Day of the 1986 National League Championship Playoff

If you put a gun to my head, you couldn't get me to recall the date of Stan's knowing my name. On the other hand, no one who was there will forget Oct. 15, 1986.

The National League Championship Series of 1986, Mets vs. Astros, is in general — and Game Six in specific — acknowledged to be one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, baseball playoffs of all time. Back in the day, Game Six electrified the entirety of New York City.

In those days, baseball games hadn't

Weezie was busy taking pictures for the *Marvel Fumetti* book. And Stan kept saying, "So when do we do my nude centerfold?" And finally Weezie called him on it ...

quite become the sole domain of night-time entertainment, and the NLCS Game Six had begun in the afternoon. As it crept toward evening hours, the Mets had looked as dead as disco in the top of the 9th, when suddenly they scored three runs, with Ray Knight providing a sacrifice fly that knotted the game at three (and effectively silenced the packed Astrodome).

Both teams were in a must-win situation: The Astros because to lose meant the end of the season, and the Mets because Game Seven held the prospect of the unhittable pitcher Mike Scott (and, if you believe some Mets, his formidable sandpapering skills).

Jim Shooter, Marvel's editor in chief at the time, had a television in his office. Despite the fact that the work day had long ended, a number of us drifted into Shooter's office. It was one thing if you lived nearby: You could get home quickly and not miss the game's outcome. But I faced a commute to Queens, and a number of other guys similarly had lengthy trips. When the Mets had won the World Series in 1969, I'd been stuck on a bus home from school, so I didn't want to miss a win this time around. Apparently, some others felt the same way, and so it was that, as it approached 6 p.m., a group of us alternated between calling home and explaining why we were going to be late and remaining glued to the TV.

Chris Claremont, creator of the prescient character Destiny, merely said in a vaguely portentous manner, "We'll see," and walked away.

It wasn't just us. There was a PC Richards across the street, and every television in the store window was tuned to the game. Pedestrians had stopped walking and were gathering outside the electronics store to watch the game's progress.

So Chris Claremont stuck his head into Shooter's office and asked, "What's the score?"

"Tied at three," we said. (I should mention we didn't actually speak in unison; it's just that "we" is the simplest pronoun, since I don't recall who was actually saying what.)

Chris considered that a moment and then said, "The network's going to have a problem, if they don't finish up before the American League series."

Back in the day, you see, there weren't EPSN and ESPN2 to handle game overflow.

But we said dismissively, "Don't be ridiculous. They're *already* in extra innings, and the ALCS doesn't start until 8 p.m. That's two hours from now. The game'll be long over by then."

And Chris Claremont, creator of the prescient character Destiny, merely said in a vaguely portentous manner, "We'll see," and walked away.

Flash forward to the 16th freaking inning. The Mets had scored three runs, courtesy of a misplayed Darryl Strawberry fly and singles by (yet again) Knight and Lenny Dykstra. In the bottom of the 16th, with two outs, the tying run on second, and the winning run on first, pitcher Jesse Orosco squared off against batter Kevin Bass.

For those of us in the Marvel offices, the stakes could not have been higher. Yes, there was concern over a loss; yes, there was worry that the Mets' amazing season would crash and burn in a Game Seven. But towering over all of that was the fact that the clock was heading with hideous speed toward 8 p.m., which meant that the unthinkable loomed: The prospect of Chris Claremont coming in the next day saying, "Well, how about that? The NLCS collided with the ALCS. Who could *possibly* have seen that coming? Oh, wait, that's right ... *I did.*"

And then Orosco, on his sixth straight slider, struck out Bass, and, as the network immediately switched to the about-to-start ALCS, Shooter's office erupted in twin celebration: The Mets were the league champions, and Chris Claremont had lost gloating rights.

But, damn, it was close.

The Day Carol Kalish Was Speechless

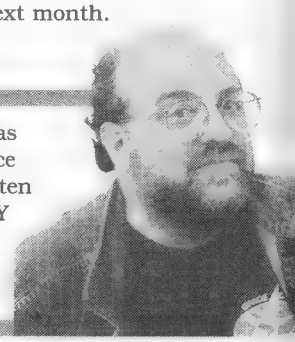
Back in the day, the direct sales office consisted of myself, my assistant Sandy Schecter, her assistant Fred Bauman, and our collective boss, the late, great Carol Kalish.

Fred was a young guy (I'd guess he's probably 20 years older now) with a passing resemblance to David Spade (who wouldn't join *Saturday Night Live* until 1990, so no one had yet heard of him). One day, Fred went into Carol's office, because she had loaned him 20 bucks the previous week ... or maybe she'd won it playing cards. I don't remember, but, whatever the reason, he owed her a $20 and he was going to pay her back.

Carol happened to be meeting with a couple of distributors at the time. Sensing an opportunity, Fred walked in, lay the $20 on Carol's desk, and deadpanned, "Thank you for letting me work here another week, Ms. Kalish," turned, and walked out of the office.

The distributors howled with laughter, as much for Carol's look of total astonishment as for Fred's comedy timing. It is the only occasion on record where Carol was stunned into silence.

More remains of "the day" next month.



PETER DAVID, writer of stuff, has written *But I Digress* for ***CBG*** since #871 in 1990. Peter can be written to at P.O. Box 239, Bayport, NY 11705, or visited at *www.peterdavid.net.*

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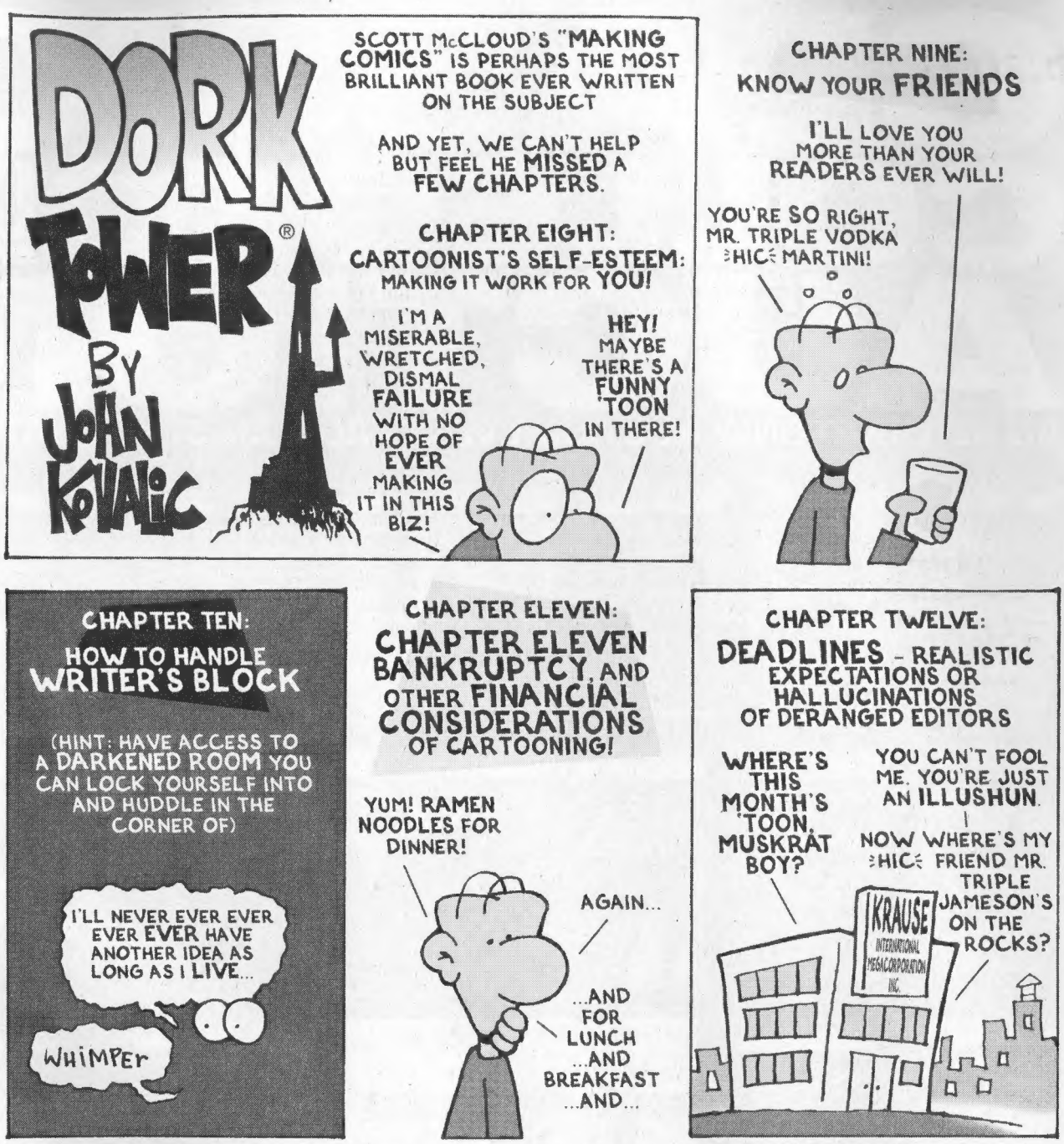

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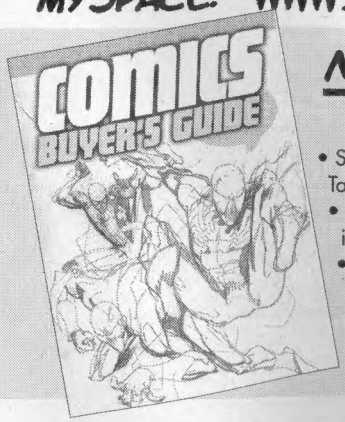

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5,000	220.20	269.20	360.00	481.80	232.00
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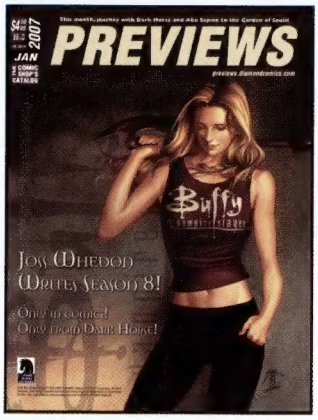

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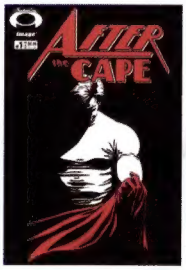

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